

# Birdsong Nature Center

November-December 2023

TRAILS AND BIRD WINDOW OPEN WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS

*Hours: Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays 9 to 5  
Sundays 1 to 5*

## November

Thurs	Nov. 2	Butterfly Garden Workday
Sat	Nov. 4	Free Family Day
<b>Sat</b>	<b>Nov. 4</b>	<b>Fall Plant Sale</b>
Sun	Nov. 26	Thanksgiving Weekend Walk

## December

Sat	Dec. 2	Free Family Day
Sat	Dec. 2	Take a Child Outside for the Holidays
Thurs	Dec. 7	Butterfly Garden Workday
Sat	Dec. 9	Winter Birding Walk
Sat	Dec. 16	Winter Solstice Celebration

**Thurs Dec. 21 Birdsong will be closed December 21 to January 3**

**January Jan. 3 Center Reopens Wednesday January 3, 2024**

*Please, no pets on Nature Center property.*

**Admission:** members, free; non-member adults, \$5.00; children 4-12, \$2.50

Dear Friends,

We have some great news that we're very happy to share with you. First, the Tractor Appeal Campaign that was set in motion on August 14 has been wonderfully successful, *thanks to all of you!* To date, we have received gifts from approximately 100 generous donors totaling \$47,500! We are on our way to the appeal goal of \$60,000 and could not be more thrilled or grateful for the generous outpouring of support. We're so much closer to purchasing a new tractor for Birdsong, and so much the better for the exceptional generosity and kindness of our donors. On behalf of Birdsong's staff and Board - *and a very happy burn crew* - we thank you very much!

Secondly, work that was funded by the House and Gardens Improvements Campaign, which began September of 2022, has progressed steadily and beneficially. Most recently the roof on the House was replaced, a new roof was installed on the back porch, and the House bathroom renovation project is nearing completion. While roofs are essential, though maybe not so aesthetically interesting, we think our newly renovated bathroom is going to be a work of art! Thank you again to all our generous Improvements Campaign donors who made these and many other improvements possible. Please see the Appeals Update on page 4 for more details and our sincere thanks to our construction volunteers.

Thank you for all you have done, especially over this past year, to keep Birdsong thriving and available for all to enjoy as we look forward to our 38th year of operation. On behalf of Birdsong's staff and Board, we wish you a very peaceful and prosperous year in 2024.

Sincerely, and with warmest regards,  
Joe Peresich, President  
Birdsong Board of Directors

<b>BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER</b>
<b>WEB SITE: <a href="http://www.birdsongnaturecenter.org">www.birdsongnaturecenter.org</a></b>
<b>EMAIL: <a href="mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org">birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org</a></b>
<b>TWITTER: <a href="https://twitter.com/BirdsongNatureC">@BirdsongNatureC</a></b>
<b>FACEBOOK: Birdsong Nature Center</b>
<b>YOUTUBE: Birdsong Nature Center</b>
<b>PHONE: 229-377-4408</b>

## A CONSERVATION EASEMENT THANK YOU

As we explained in the last newsletter, it took the support and hard work of many people and organizations to complete the grant and conservation easement project. We want to thank those individuals and organizations again, and also list the many individuals who contributed.

We are very thankful for the significant support received from Tall Timbers: from its leadership, including the *Board of Directors, President and CEO Bill Palmer, the Finance Committee, and the Conservation Easement Committee*. We especially thank recently *retired Land Conservancy Director Kevin McGorty*, who originally recommended that we pursue the Georgia DNR grant, and most of all the new *Land Conservancy Director, Shane Wellendorf*, for his tireless work over four years to shepherd the complex grant process with DNR and then help move the easement process through Tall Timbers. We are very grateful for Shane's professionalism and persistence and that of his staff. We also appreciate his willingness to help us develop legal language and agreements that were pleasing to both parties. The entire grant-easement project took patience and commitment from all involved and we are very happy with our new partnership with Tall Timbers.

We appreciated the opportunity to apply for the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant and thank the *Boards of Trustees of DNR and the GOSP Trust Fund* for making this available and for providing the DNR staff that were so helpful in guiding us through the grant process.

We also thank all parties that provided financial support for this project that enabled Birdsong to receive the full value of the sale of future development rights: *the Conservation Fund, The EJK Foundation, Tall Timbers, the Grady County Commission, the Grady County Joint Development Authority and Alexander & Vann*.

We have many to thank in the *City of Cairo, Grady County, legislators of the State of Georgia* and our 2<sup>nd</sup> CD *US Congressman* for their strong support for this project.

At this time, we want to thank the many individuals who work within the above organizations or who contributed privately to completing this milestone for Birdsong:

### **Tall Timbers Land Conservancy and other Tall Timbers staff**

Mr. Shane Wellendorf, Land Conservancy Director  
Mr. Kevin McGorty, Land Conservancy Director, retired  
Ms. Kim Sash, Biological Monitoring Coordinator  
Mr. Nelson Ball, RCPP Field Biologist  
Ms. Kim Lynn Nguyen, Conservation Biologist  
Ms. Hollie Guthrie, Land Conservancy Office Manager  
Mr. Rob Meyer, Woodpecker Conservation Specialist, Stoddard Bird Lab  
Mr. Brian Wiebler, Tall Timbers Communications Director

### **Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program**

Ms. Soheila Naji, GOSP Coordinator

### **City of Cairo, Grady County, and within the State of Georgia**

US Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, District 2  
Senator Sam Watson, District 11  
Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Dean Burke, former State Senator, District 11  
Representative Darlene Taylor, District 173  
Mr. Buddy Johnson, County Administrator, Grady County Commission  
Commissioner Phillip Drew, District 5  
Commissioner June Knight, District 1  
Commissioner Ray Prince, District 2  
Commissioner Keith Moye, District 3  
Commissioner LaFaye Copeland, District 4  
Sheriff Harry Young  
Mr. Chris Addleton, Grady Joint Development Authority  
Julian Brown, City Manager, City of Cairo  
Councilman Lannis Thornton, District 1  
Councilman Demario Byrden, District 2

**City of Cairo, Grady County, and within the State of Georgia (cont'd)**

Councilman Bobby Gwaltney, District 3  
Councilman Jimmy Douglas, District 4  
Councilman Jerry Cox, District 5  
Mr. Howard Thrower, former Cairo Mayor  
Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Wind, the Cairo Messenger  
Ms. Sharon Liggett, Archway Partnership, UGA  
Ms. Rhonda Gordon, Executive Director, Golden Triangle RC&D  
Dr. Christine Ambrose, formerly of Thomas University

**Alexander & Vann, LLC**

Mrs. Renee Hall Oliveto, Attorney  
Mrs. Sheryl Icard

**The Conservation Fund**

Mr. Andrew Schock, Upper Southeast Regional Director,  
Conservation Acquisition

**The E.J. Knobloch Foundation**

Trustees

**Additional Letters of Support**

Mrs. Beth Candelario, Birdsong member and volunteer  
Ms. Lisa Billups, Executive Director, Thomasville  
Community Resource Center

**Advisors**

Mr. Pete Fodor, Trust for Public Land, retired  
Mr. Paul Massey, Ecological Forester



**BIRDSONG'S FALL PLANT SALE**  
**Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 1pm**

It is hard for people in other parts of the country to understand, but Fall is the beginning of our gardening year. It is time to mark your calendar for Birdsong's Fall Plant Sale – on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 1pm. This sale should be easy and enjoyable for plant buyers and for our worker volunteers.

Would you like to help? We need workers to help set up the sale on Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00am to 3:00pm and on the day of the sale from 8:00 to 3:00.

Do you have plants you'd like to donate? We especially need red hurricane lily bulbs. This is the perfect time to dig them up as they are just beginning to put up leaves.

We look forward to seeing you and celebrating the change of seasons.

- June White  
Plant Sale Chair

## ANNUAL APPEAL UPDATES

### Tractor Appeal

We offer our heartfelt thanks to everyone who so generously responded to our appeal for support to help us replace our beloved old 3010 tractor with a reliable new one. Thanks to your gifts we are now approaching our \$60,000 goal; as of today, October 10<sup>th</sup>, our total is \$47,500!

Thanks to you Birdsong will soon have new equipment and be able to get back to burning! We thank you too, for the many kind comments made about your appreciation and concern for Birdsong's needs. We feel very fortunate to have such generous and supportive members.

### House and Gardens Improvements Appeal

We are pleased to let you know that several segments of the 2022 House and Gardens Appeal have been completed and others are still a work in progress. As of this past August, we have a new shingle roof on Birdsong's historic house and a new metal roof on the back porch. No more fear of leaks when rain is predicted! We used Pyramid Roofing from Valdosta, and are very pleased with the job they did. They perfectly matched the shingles and metal to the original roofs to help us maintain historical integrity and they look wonderful.

The bathroom renovation is proceeding on a regular basis. Our talented and generous construction volunteers have been spending every Thursday morning (or more) on this project and we now have the old (leaking) tub removed, new beams under the floor, and a beautiful new floor – with lumber obtained from a tree taken from Phil Williams' home! The milling was done as a gift from our board member Ellery Sedgwick. A cabinet for a new sink is being constructed from lumber also milled by Ellery's company, Red Hills Lumber, and taken from the huge backyard loblolly that was struck by lightning. It is being designed to match the cabinets in Betty's kitchen. The team has removed the old particle board walls and put in new drywall and painted. We have left an interesting wall exposed; it may have been part of the original porch. We hope to have the entire renovation done by early next year, if not sooner. We will keep you posted. None of this could have happened without our extraordinary volunteer construction crew: Glenn Berman, Buddy Holshouser, Phil Williams, and Steve Kunst, and board members Mike Brezin and Ellery Sedgwick. Thank you, construction team!

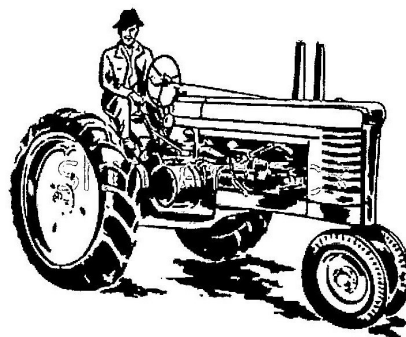
A large part of the gardens on the south and west side of the house were cleared of invasives last year by the Native Nurseries landscaping crew. These wonderful folks came out all fall and removed *Ardisia*, *Nandina*, bamboo, tallow, and other problem plants. Since then, Alan Parker and Mike Carter have gone into this area and continued this invasives removal and control. The bamboo is particularly persistent, and we have to use herbicide on it, so we will keep at this until it is gone before we do any new planting. It is, as mentioned, a work in progress. Thank you for your patience – these kinds of projects often take longer than originally expected, but we are looking forward to their successful completion. Further updates will be provided in the next newsletter.

### FREE FAMILY DAYS

**First Saturdays: November 4 (Fall Plant Sale Day)  
and December 2**

On first Saturdays of the month admission is free and we offer a \$5-off membership special. If you know of any families who have never been to Birdsong, please let them know about this opportunity. This is a nice chance for first-time visitors to enjoy the trails, get to know the property, and visit the Bird Window and Butterfly Garden. Please note that November 4 is Fall Plant Sale Day, so there will be extra traffic in and out of the driveway and parking lot.

**Admission: free**



## WINTER BIRDING WALK AT BIRDSONG

With Janell Cleveland and Adam George  
Saturday, December 9, 8:00 to 11:30am

Late fall/early winter is a wonderful time to enjoy birds at Birdsong. We'll be on the lookout for Cedar Waxwings as they move through the forest in small flocks in search of berries. We'll also keep our eyes open for winter warblers, like the Black-and-White, Yellow-rumped, and Orange-crowned. We'll listen for the familiar songs of Carolina Chickadees and Tufted Titmice as we search for the more elusive Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. We'll check the pond for waders as well as ducks, hoping for a look at a Belted Kingfisher as well. We'll end our walk with a stroll through the pines, keeping our eyes and ears open for Red-headed Woodpeckers and both White-breasted and Brown-headed Nuthatches.

The walk will be led jointly by Janell Cleveland, an avid birder and founder of the Red Hills Birding Club, and Adam George, a certified Master Birder who works for Georgia Audubon on their educational technology platforms. If you'd like to learn more about the Red Hills Birding Club, you can reach Janell at 229-726-9056.

Please save your space and RSVP by emailing [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org) or calling 1(229)377-4408 by noon on the Friday before the walk, December 8th. The maximum number of participants for these walks is capped at 15. Please bring binoculars if you have them and be prepared for hiking through the fields and woods around Birdsong. Wear muted colors.

\$8 members, \$10 non-members. **Reservations required.**

## BIRDSONG BUTTERFLY GARDEN Volunteer Workdays on first Thursdays, November 2 and December 7 9 to 11 AM

### TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE For The Holidays! Saturday, December 2 9:30-Noon

Bring your favorite child to Birdsong and enjoy a morning in the woods with Sandra Sallee and Carolyn Cohen, as you get an early start on preparations for the winter holidays. Give your young person an alternative approach to holiday giving this year and let them collect their own natural materials to make a holiday gift. Each child can take a collecting bag and Sandra and Carolyn will lead us out on a natural treasure hunt to discover what nature has to offer! This is harvest time, with nuts, berries and leaves in profusion. Back at the Barn turn your child's imagination loose to create whatever item he or she wants or let them make a candleholder or surprise gift item with the materials you have collected.

\$6 Friends, \$9 nonmembers, children half-price. Make **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE** by noon on Friday, December 1, so we know what materials to provide. Call (229)377-4408 or email [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org).

September and October are always great months for witnessing the peak blooms of some of the showy flowers growing in the Birdsong Butterfly Garden. Firebush, horsemint, goldenrod and ironweed are just some of the native plants that provide nectar for butterflies, hummingbirds and a large variety of bees and other pollinators. This year the garden has been alive with movement as Gulf fritillaries, cloudless sulphurs, tiger and pipevine swallowtails, long-tailed skippers and zebra longwings visited their favorite flowers. Some of this pollinator activity will persist during November.

Sights such as these reward garden volunteers when they meet on the first Thursday of every month to plant, weed, chat and enjoy this quiet corner of Birdsong. New volunteers are always welcome. No gardening experience is necessary, just a desire to work alongside friendly folks and pick up a wealth of plant and pollinator knowledge at the same time.

The next workday is Thursday, November 2, from 9-11 am. Contact Donna Legare ([dlegare@comcast.net](mailto:dlegare@comcast.net)) if interested.

-Ann Morrow  
Butterfly Garden Volunteer

## WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 16, 2023

\$10 adults, \$6 children

Welcome back! It has been four years since we have gathered for the Solstice. We have really missed our annual (pre-Covid) musical tribute to the cosmos and are pleased to gather once again to celebrate the Winter Solstice with our friends. We are very happy to announce that our Solstice Sister, Velma Frye, will sing and play for us again, and we'll be joined by the talented Didja Vu/Vibe Tribe, with Debra Amesqua.

*4 to 5pm* Arrive early, bring your own hot or cold drinks, a picnic supper, lawn chairs or blanket and settle in to enjoy the evening.

*5:00pm* Listen to the music and angelic voice of Velma Frye.

*5:45pm* Welcome to the Winter Solstice Celebration!

We will light the bonfire, accompanied by DidjaVu/Vibe Tribe and Debra Amesqua on their didgeridoos, drums, and other instruments.

Once the bonfire is going strong, we will “throw the bamboo”. Each person will be given a bamboo stick to throw in the fire where it will explode and create good intentions for the coming year.

*Around 6:30* Together we will walk to the Star Pasture. Dress for the weather, bring a blanket to lie on to observe the stars, and bring a flashlight and your binoculars or scope for viewing.

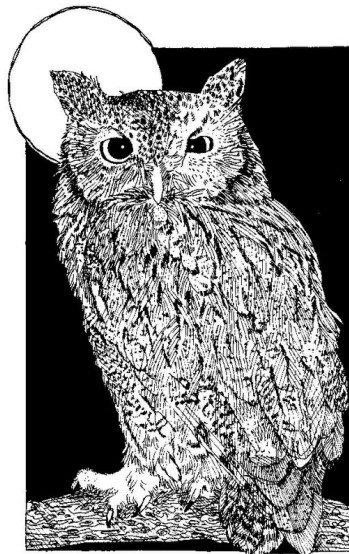
*Rest of the evening:* Contemplate the Universe with your family and friends, warm up around the bonfire, and enjoy more didgeridoo music.

It is our hope that this evening will give you a moment to deeply connect with nature, to be with your friends, to witness something beautiful, to consider what really matters to you at this time of year, and experience some peace and quiet under the night sky before heading back to a busy holiday season.

*PLEASE NOTE:* This is an all-outdoor event. At this time of year there is always a chance of rain, so please pay attention to the weather and call before driving out if you have questions. You can also check our website and Facebook page. Unfortunately, if it rains several days in advance, it can soak the bonfire, which may not have time to dry out before the event, as well as the ground where we'll be sitting.

Dress for the weather and remember to bring: your favorite drinks, a picnic supper (no food provided), blanket, lawn chairs, flashlight, and binoculars.

Please let us know you are coming. Contact us at: [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org) or 1(229)377-4408.

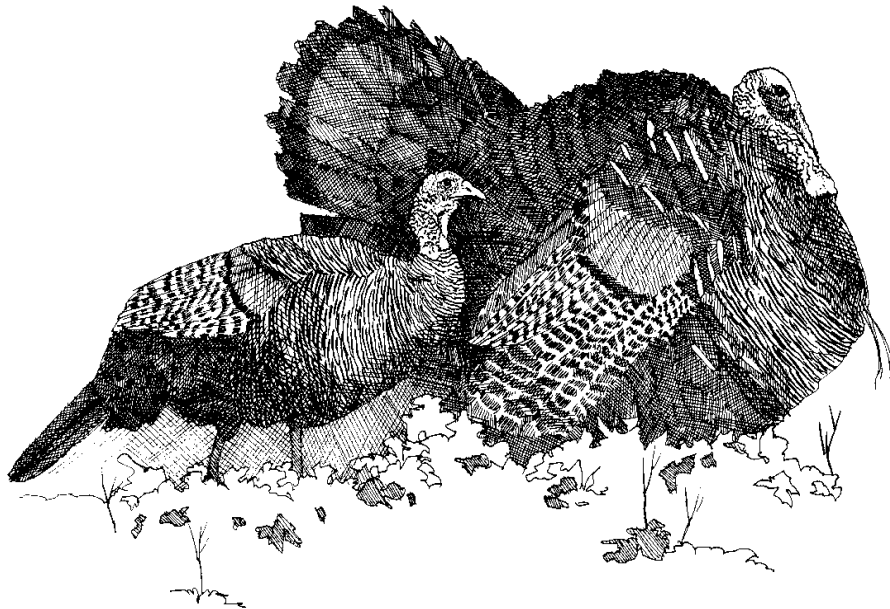


**THANKSGIVING WEEKEND WALK**  
**Sunday, November 26**  
**2 to 4pm**

Join Birdsong volunteer Beth Grant and retrace part of the route our late friend mathematician Don Hill developed for a marvelous nature walk he used to lead annually. His description still applies:

“Too much turkey? Got cabin fever? Want your visitors to experience the Red Hills of North Florida/South Georgia? We will leisurely explore several miles of Birdsong’s less-traveled trails as we experience Birdsong’s rich and varied habitats with all they have to offer.” At this time of year we may see trees in their fall colors, including gold hickories, russet oaks, and sourwoods in all shades of red and peach. Beth Grant led this walk for a number of years before Covid and made it her own. This year she will choose the route as you go! You will enjoy her observations and in-depth knowledge of native plants and pollinators.

\$6 Friends, \$9 nonmembers, children half-price.



**GIFT MEMBERSHIPS FOR THE HOLIDAYS!**

Birdsong memberships make excellent gifts: for a very reasonable fee your recipient will have access to this beautiful natural haven for an entire year whenever we are open, receive our newsletter with its Wildlife Management Notes every other month, receive discounts on many of our nature programs, and receive guest passes to share with others. In addition, you, the giver, have the assurance that your funds go toward preserving and managing this beautiful and historically significant land for the benefit of native plant communities and their associated wildlife, and help make it available for all to enjoy.

If you would like to give a Birdsong membership for the holidays or for any other occasion, please contact us at [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org) or call 229-377-4408 and we can help you. We will send your recipient a card informing them of your gift and acknowledging you, the giver. A member packet including a membership card, a newsletter, guest passes, and the nature center reciprocal agreement link will be sent out shortly afterwards. A Birdsong membership is a gift that lasts an entire year!

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

### September 29, 2023

**Weather** That was a long, hot, exhausting summer. One for the books. We have made it past the September equinox and are enjoying the early stages of fall as the days shorten. It still gets very hot during the day, but the mornings have been pleasant and breezy and refreshing. What a relief!

We had no major problems with Hurricane Idalia and hope you didn't either. A few trees were blown over, some large limbs were broken, and the power was out for a day, but we had no damage to any buildings. The one hurricane casualty that makes us sad is the ancient mulberry tree behind the house, close to the Equipment Shed – most of that big old tree fell. Parts of it are still alive and there is a small portion of it still standing, but most of it came down. We are sorry to see this because it is a favorite spring migrant bird destination; its huge ripe mulberries are always a big draw. Our bird photographers love the photogenic visitors it attracts, and they come out in anticipation of some good shots every year. We hope we may be able to keep some of it alive, but we are grieving the loss of this beloved tree.

We did have plenty of rain this summer, with 7.17 inches falling in August, including 3.26 from Idalia. We've also had 3.28 inches in September. Unfortunately, with all this water flowing there has been a recent breach in the Farm Pond Dam close to former beaver caverns and the beavers are not busily plugging that up, so it will require some major attention soon. There appears to be no threat to the integrity of the trail, but we'll be keeping a close watch on it. Too bad the beavers didn't take that repair job on!

**Land Management** We offer our sincere thanks to all the many donors who have given so generously to the Tractor Appeal. We are getting closer to our goal every day and by the first of the year, we hope to have purchased a new tractor and be able to start our cool season burning – thanks to you!

Meanwhile, we got the 3010 back from the repair shop and Alan has been able to mow the trails, so that has been a nice change. It still has a problem with a hydraulic fluid leak, and we are discussing this with the repairman, but for now Alan can mow. We appreciate everyone's patience with the trails being a little shaggy this summer. Soon the growing season will be slowing down and the trails will be nice for walking for the duration of winter.

**Fall Wildflowers** Our rainy summer has shown some great benefits already: the cloudy days of July enabled the Purple Martins to fledge that final last brood with no fatalities and we had an extraordinary Butterfly Pea bloom – best in memory! The rain has also contributed

to the early emergence of what promises to be a flamboyant fall wildflower bloom.

The *Agalinis* is back! The Gin House is full of False Foxglove, or *Agalinis*, the tall, waving wildflower that is the host plant for the Common Buckeye butterfly. Its flowers are a deep pink, with a bell-shaped tube with 5 lobes or petals. It is a wonderful pollinator plant and is fed on appreciatively by all kinds of bees who wedge their way into the bell, or if too big, will eat a hole in the tube to reach the nectar. Right now, there are enormous beetles eating the flowers themselves, as yet unidentified. They are beautifully patterned, gold and black, long but heavy-bodied, and they are manically eating the buds and petals. Spiny Buckeye caterpillars can be seen on the stems, feeding on the leaves. We highly recommend a walk along the central trail in the Gin House to fully experience being surrounded by a cloud of pink and all its associated bees and butterflies!

Goldenrod too has emerged and is putting on a show across the property. It is filling up the lower House Pasture, extensive patches are emerging in the Gin House Field, and it is lining the Upper Pond Dam. Another happy result of plenty of rainfall are the intermittent stretches of Blue Curl along the trail at the north edge of the Gin House. This is a distinctive wildflower in the mint family, with long curved stamens, hence its name. We didn't see much of it last year, so this is special. Elephant's Foot can be found in abundance this year too – particularly along trails in dappled shade. Bidens tickseed is in its glory at the Butterfly Garden, around the house gardens and just about everywhere else! There are Bidens shrubs right outside my office window and I think there is not a flower that doesn't have its own bee. So much feeding activity – lots of different bee species are crazy about this plant. And we've got plenty of it. We love it now, but as soon as it blooms out and the seeds dry, we wish we didn't have as much – they stick to your clothes and to dogs' fur and can be really annoying. All these beautiful wildflowers are keeping our pollinators happy and well-fed. It is a delight to witness. Quite a year for wildflowers!

**Bird Window** It has been a busy summer for us at Birdsong, between completing the easement, dealing with tractor issues, making the Tractor Appeal, continuing work on the House and Garden project, and getting ready for our easement celebration – Lynn and I have not spent much time at all visiting the Bird Window. Just yesterday, Lynn took a few moments to see what birds might be coming through and had a good viewing session. She took some wonderful photos of a Red-eyed Vireo, Summer Tanager females, a juvenile male Scarlet Tanager, Gray Catbirds, a Swainson's Thrush and a rabbit who came in for the corn! My favorite shot was one of a tanager and catbird in the



water together, facing opposite directions within the frame. We'll post these photos on Facebook soon so you will get to enjoy them too.

The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have been busy all summer long and many are still using the feeders. Most of our summer contingent appear to have left and Lynn is seeing birds who are unfamiliar with the feeders coming in and figuring out where to find the ports. So, the Hummingbirds are on the move. Betty's records going back decades had October 13<sup>th</sup> as the Ruby-throats' last day. We wish them safe passage over the Gulf.

**Fawns** On August 22nd I went for a walk at lunchtime and took the road south down past the azaleas, along the bay, then up to the Shortleaf Woods going from west to east. It was an extremely hot afternoon, bright and sunny and still; walking was work and sweaty going. I was nearly to the 90-degree turn at the intersection where a spur trail leads south and the main trail heads north. I heard a huff and a rustling in the greenery nearby on the Wildlife Woods side and glanced up in time to see a lovely doe bounding effortlessly away to the north where she disappeared in the brushy woods. She was graceful, sleek, a rich rusty color, and it was a pleasure to watch that pure white tail wave from side to side with every bound. I kept walking, enjoying that image. I turned the corner and headed up hill feeling very hot and glad I was now half-way around my route. Just a little further up the hill I noticed some movement to my left and heard an odd sound, a little cry or call. I looked over and there were two fawns, their heads and shoulders above the level of the vegetation, large ears at a wide angle, faces alert and staring straight at me, about thirty feet away. The sound continued and I realized that they were bleating. It was a forlorn and anxious little sound. I realized that they must have been bedded down with their mother when she got startled by me and bolted. They started to timidly approach me, a few steps at a time. I just stood as still and watched them come closer, not sure what was happening, but they kept coming closer and bleating. Finally, the first fawn got within 5 feet of me and lifted her muzzle toward my hand, and something instinctive in me made me reach out. That did it – they both whirled around and dashed off, but then stopped about 15 feet away, resituated themselves and then back they both came, bleating. I believe they were hoping to see their mother and were so anxious about finding her that they thought maybe this large creature might suit under duress. "Are you my mother?" They approached again, bleating away. From the moment I saw them they both kept shaking their heads, as if trying to relieve their ears of something irritating. Along the way, one did some scratching with a back foot. With each step they picked up and set down their feet so carefully, and had beautiful little knees. The bravest one who approached first

had the same rusty color as her mother with two buffy stripes down each side of her neck, and several bands of buff spots lengthwise down her sides. The sister had similar patterning, but with much less contrast and more spots on her flanks. Their faces were beautiful, huge dark eyes, and long eyelashes. They were not tiny, not babies, but they were still quite young and clearly non-plussed without mom. They tried another approach, and came all the way onto the road, wanting to get close, but still not trusting the situation. At one point something spooked them and they tore off into the weeds, further away this time. I decided I better leave and allow their mother to come back and gather them up and give them some comfort after such a frightening episode.

I walked away in a daze – I've never been that close to a deer before, much less being approached by two nervous fawns, and was very moved by the experience. They were so torn – between needing to find their mother and not really knowing who on earth this person was, and whether it was safe or not to get close to them. If anyone is interested, I got some video of parts of this experience and would be happy to show you sometime.

We are so fortunate to have Birdsong. These kinds of experiences with wildlife are available to everyone out here. It is a great time of year for exploring - even a hot afternoon feels comfortable after the summer we've all been through. There are photogenic wildflowers everywhere you go and the migrant birds are moving through. Who knows, you may encounter a fawn or two!

- KDB



**NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG**

***Thomasville***

Adam George  
Katherine Williams

***Tallahassee***

Julie Horne  
Paula Carroll  
Earl Morrogh  
Michael Trammell & Mary Jane Ryals  
Bill & Mary Davis  
Dwayne & Leslie Elmore



**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:**

***In Honor of Sue Ellen Smith:***

Jerrie Lindsey

***In Memory of Sue Ellen Smith:***

Cathy and Tom Bishop  
Jim Stevenson  
Phillip Moncrief  
Mary Lee and Phil Kiracofe  
Amy Gahran

***On behalf of Sue E. Smith:***

Robert Williamson

***Remembering Sue Smith Ritchie:***

Violet Ritchie

***In Memory of Sue Ellen Smith with love from the  
Bradford County Tornado Class of 1985:***

Lisa Brooker

***In Memory of Sue Ellen Ritchie:***

Angela Morrison

***In Memory of Rae (Kit) Parker:***

Mary Mailhot

***Special Financial Gifts:***

John and Phyllis Hiers  
Ryan Bradburn  
Keith & Becky McNeill

**Birdsong Nature Center  
Board of Directors  
2022-2023**

**President** Joe Peresich  
**Treasurer** Bill Preston  
**Secretary** Margaret Tyson

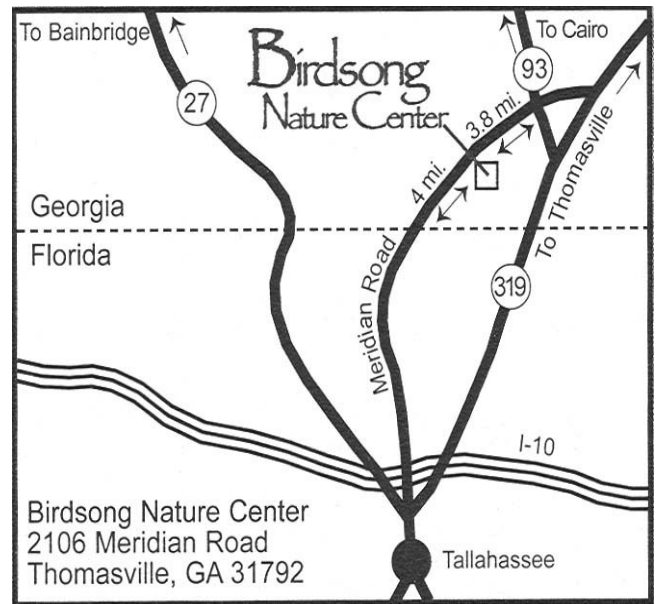
**Directors**

Jim Antista Ellery Sedgwick  
Michael Brezin Scott Ball

**BIRDSONG'S CORPORATE SPONSORS**

Native Nurseries  
Trillium Gardens Nursery  
Carroll and Company, CPAs  
Import Authority  
Seminole Alterations  
Chelsea Salon & Spa  
TNB Financial Services  
Target Print and Mail  
Armstrong Tree Service  
Woodleaf Senior Care  
Cowhey & Ward, LLC  
Loblolly Rise  
Blue Bear Farm & Cattle Co. LLC  
Magnolia Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society





**DIRECTIONS:**

From Tallahassee: Meridian Road north, 4 miles past FL/ GA border on right side of road. OR 319 north, turn left onto Rt. 93, then turn left onto Meridian Road, 3.8 miles on left side of road.

From Thomasville: 319 south, turn right at Marathon gas station onto Meridian Road, approximately 5 miles from Marathon or 3.8 miles from stop sign at Rt. 93, on left side of road.

Watch for small sign that reads "Birdsong".

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TALLAHASSEE, FL  
Permit No. 660

*Birdsong Nature Center  
2106 Meridian Road  
Thomasville, GA 31792  
Address Service Requested*