

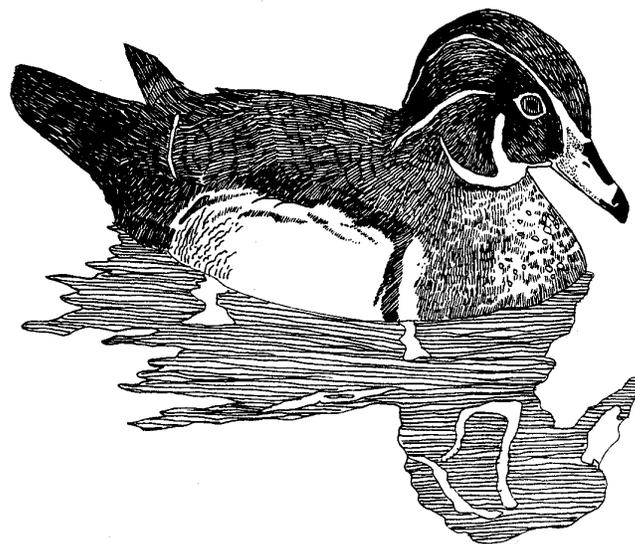
# Birdsong Nature Center

March - April 2015

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March

- Thur. Mar. 5 Butterfly Garden Work Day
- Sat. Mar. 7 Spring Birding at Birdsong
- Wed. Mar. 11 Bluebird Trail Monitoring Season Begins
- Thur. Mar. 12 Invasive Plant Removal Work Day
- Fri. Mar. 13 Longleaf Pine Workshop  
and Field Day
- Wed. Mar. 18 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Sat. Mar. 21 OLD-TIMEY PLANT SALE
- Sat. Mar. 28 Music to Our Ears: A Chorus of  
Frogs



### April

- Wed. April 1 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Thur. April 2 Butterfly Garden Work Day
- Sat. April 4 Gopher Tortoise Survey  
Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Wed. April 15 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Thur. April 16 Invasive Plant Removal Work Day
- Sat. April 18 Take a Child Outside for Earth Day!  
Bluebird Trail Monitoring

#### BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER

WEB SITE: [www.birdsongnaturecenter.org](http://www.birdsongnaturecenter.org)

EMAIL: [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org)

TWITTER: @BirdsongNatureC

FACEBOOK: Birdsong Nature Center

YOUTUBE: Birdsong Nature Center



#### BIRD WINDOW AND TRAIL HOURS

Wednesday	9 AM - 5 PM
Friday	9 AM - 5 PM
Saturday	9 AM - 5 PM
Sunday	1 PM - 5 PM

#### Bird Window and Nature Trails

Welcome to Birdsong! Enjoy the beauty and serenity of the Bird Window and learn to identify resident and visiting birds up close. Walk the Nature Trails to observe wildlife in a variety of habitats and enjoy the sounds of nature at the Listening Place. Before you leave, you may want to visit the Chickadee Corner Gift Shop. We hope you enjoy your stay!

*All visitors please sign in at the Registration Center. Trail maps are provided. Pets, trash and fires are not permitted.*

#### Registration

Please register for all programs by calling or emailing: (229) 377-4408, 1 (800) 953-BIRD, Birdsong Office  
Fax line (229)-377-8723, or [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org)

Dear Birdsong Members,

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, our Board of Directors has been giving consideration to increasing Birdsong's membership dues. We have come to the realization that an increase is needed and have committed to making this change sometime in the next few months, very likely by May 1, 2015. We have not yet arrived at the revised pricing for our membership categories but plan to announce details shortly.

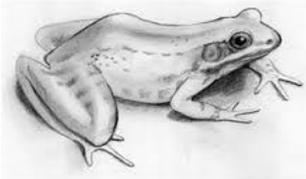
As you know, Birdsong is a privately supported 501c(3) non-profit organization. Membership dues are an important part of income needed to operate the Center though they cover only a fraction of costs. Our fees have not changed since Birdsong's founding in 1986. We realized that an increase in membership dues was needed to help reflect and offset the increased expenses of operating in modern times. We also intend, though, that Birdsong remain a great value to our members, all of whom support the Center so generously.

Before these changes occur we would like to offer our members the opportunity to renew and extend current memberships at today's rates. Prior to May 1, 2015, any member renewing or increasing a membership level will have one year added to the membership. For example, if your membership expires September 30, 2015, you can renew before May 1 at today's rates and your membership will be extended to September 30, 2016. Renewals and new memberships purchased after May 1 would be at the new higher rates. Membership expiration dates are printed on the mailing label of your newsletter.

Gift memberships can be purchased to be given any time this calendar year at the current rate, to be honored starting on the date of the intended gift (e.g., Christmas gifts could be "ordered" and paid for now, and delivered in December, for a year's membership starting on the December date of delivery.)

Please know that we do not take lightly the notion of increasing membership fees. We want very much to maintain this unique, beautiful place in the manner it so deserves, for future and current generations, and for Birdsong to continue being a great value to its members. We very sincerely appreciate all of your kind support – as members, donors, and volunteers – in helping make Birdsong the irreplaceable asset to our community that it is. We wouldn't be here today but for your interest in helping to preserve this special place, and in supporting the Center's mission of fostering awareness, understanding, and appreciation of nature. We sincerely hope that you will continue to be the greatly valued Birdsong member, and partner, that you are today for many years to come.

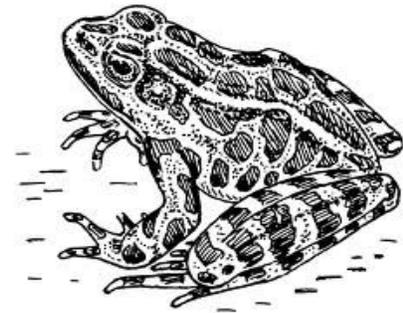
Most respectfully yours,  
Joe Peresich  
Board President



**MUSIC TO OUR EARS: A CHORUS OF FROGS**  
**Saturday, March 28 6 – 8:30 PM**

Join us for a presentation and field experience with Nancy Ann Thomas. In addition to Nancy's love of birds and dragonflies, she has also had a long-standing interest in frogs and their calls. Nancy has created an hour-long power point presentation to teach us all about our local frog species: their life cycles, ecology, and conservation. Have you ever wondered what frogs were making those wonderful calls at night? After the presentation, Nancy will lead us out to Big Bay Swamp where we can learn to identify some of those alluring calls. You will come away equipped to identify those evocative sounds wherever you go! Dress for the weather, and wear shoes for hiking to the swamp. Bring binoculars.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** This program is geared for adults and mature children. Please call the office or email by 4pm Friday, March 27 to reserve a space.  
\$4 Friends, \$8 non-members.



**SPRING BIRDING AT BIRDSONG**  
**Saturday, March 7**  
**8AM to 11 or so**

Join us for a leisurely morning of early spring birding with Marvin Collins. We will visit a variety of excellent birding habitats including open old-field, pine woods, swamp and mixed hardwoods. The hike will wrap up with a visit to the Bird Window, which is typically a very busy place this time of year. Dress for the weather and be prepared for hiking three or four miles. Bring binoculars, water and a snack.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Call or email to let us know you are coming by 4PM Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>.  
\$4 Friends, \$8 non-members.



# BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER OLD-TIMEY PLANT SALE



**SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2015  
9 AM - 1 PM**

Birdsong Nature Center's Old-Timey Plant Sale Committee is working hard to make this eighth annual sale the best ever. The sale will offer a varied and extensive collection of beloved old garden plants, heirloom tomatoes, and plants for butterflies and birds. There will be lots of native trees, shrubs, and perennials especially suited to our area, including many varieties of wild azaleas, and some rare and unusual native plants. Knowledgeable and friendly horticulturists will be volunteering at the sale to help you make a selection for your own garden. Come out and welcome Spring at the Birdsong Plant Sale!

**Native trees and shrubs  
Hundreds of native azaleas  
Wildflowers  
Old-fashioned plants  
Heirloom plants**

**Nature-related gifts, books, t-shirts, and more for sale.**

**Lunch: hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers and more, or bring a picnic.**

**The Old-Timey Plant Sale Preview Party is being held on Friday evening, March 20th. Patrons may purchase plants in advance of the sale; there will be wine, hors d'oeuvres and music. The cost is \$100 per person or \$150 for a couple. Payment and registration must be received in the Birdsong office by Friday, March 13th.**

**Call for information (800)953-2473.**

**Would anyone be willing to lend us your garden cart, wagon, or other transport device to escort customers to their cars with their purchases? Please call: (229)377-4408 or (800)953-2473.**

**We need volunteers to help with setting up on Thursday March 19 and to work 2-3 hour shifts between 8 AM and 2 PM on Saturday, March 21st. Jobs may include: parking, greeting visitors, answering the phone, working at Birdsong's Gift Shop, serving food and drinks and helping transport customers' purchases to their cars. Please call (800) 953-2473 to sign up.**

## **INVASIVES REMOVAL WORK DAYS**

**Thursdays, 9:30AM to Noon  
March 12 and April 16**

Join us this spring to clear out non-native invasive plant species from Birdsong's building and garden sites. We will be removing large old *Ligustrum* or privet, tallow trees, camphor trees, and mid-sized shrubs including all of the above as well as cherry laurel, *Lantana*, *Nandina*, and *Ardisia*.

Please call or email to let us know you will be coming: [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org), or 1(800)953-2473. Dress for the weather, bring chain saws, bow saws, loppers, clippers, shovels and work gloves. Water and a snack provided.

## **2015 BLUEBIRD TRAIL MONITORING SEASON ABOUT TO BEGIN!**

**Wednesdays and Saturdays at 9AM  
March 11, 18; April 1, 4, 15, 18**

Veteran Bluebird Monitoring Team members Myles Black and Bob Bearss are gearing up for the 2015 monitoring season. Myles has the schedule prepared and they will start things off by cleaning and preparing boxes on Wednesday, March 11 at 9AM. Regular monitoring to count eggs and fledglings and record observations will follow on the rest of the above listed dates. This is a fantastic learning experience, a wonderful way to get to know Birdsong and you will be doing the Bluebirds a service. Please call and let us know you are coming, and dress for the weather. For more information, call (229) 377-4408.

**LONGLEAF PINE WORKSHOP AND FIELD DAY**  
**Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's NRC and Golden Triangle RC&D**  
**Friday, March 13, 2015 \* 10am – 4pm \* No Charge \* Reservations Required**

Last year Birdsong Nature Center was awarded a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service to help pay for efforts to improve Gopher Tortoise habitat here at Birdsong. This included funding for prescribed burning, hardwood brush removal and planting of longleaf pine. We are pleased to invite you to attend a free educational program about the longleaf pine ecosystem and its conservation and management. This workshop is provided by the Golden Triangle Resource Conservation & Development Council which partners in its conservation efforts with NRCS.

We will gather at the Birdsong Barn at 10am for presentations by longleaf pine specialists in the morning and again in the early afternoon after a working lunch. We will then walk out on the property to visit a longleaf area and hike back and wrap up the program at 4pm.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE:** Please be sure to reserve your space with Ms. Julie Shutters; contact info below. Lunch will be provided and space is limited, so she needs to hear from you. This program is geared for adults.

**Helping Hands for Forest Ecosystems: Longleaf Pine**  
**Free educational workshop and field day**

A free educational field day for landowners, farmers, clubs, organizations, teachers, schools or anyone interested in conservation.

There will be guest speakers from the Longleaf Pine Alliance, Georgia's Department of Natural Resources, the Georgia Forestry Commission and USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Topics include: Longleaf Pine history/range/disease, wildlife management, invasive plants, prescribed burning, conservation programs and conservation measures, land management and economic value.

A working lunch will be provided; wear comfortable clothes and walking shoes for the afternoon hike.

**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:** contact Julie Shutters at 229-723-3841 or [j.shutters@yahoo.com](mailto:j.shutters@yahoo.com)

Funding for this workshop is provided through a grant from USDA-NRCS and Golden Triangle RC&D

**TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE**  
**FOR EARTH DAY!**  
**Saturday, April 18**  
**9:30 – 11:30AM**

Celebrate the coming of Earth Day (April 22) at Birdsong with your favorite child or children. Leader Sandra Sallee will take you on a natural adventure in the woods. Give an ongoing gift to your child: an appreciation of nature, a better understanding of where they live, and the use of all their senses. Walk the trails and search for evidence of animal homes, signs of their presence, and springtime behavior. Enjoy the fresh air, some exercise, and a special experience with your child in the great outdoors.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Call or email by Friday, April 18th to reserve your space. \$3 Friends, \$5 nonmembers, children half-price. Includes a handout and resource list for year-round activities with children.

**GOPHER TORTOISE SURVEY**  
**Saturday, April 4**  
**9:30 to 11:30AM**

We would be pleased to have your help with an ongoing project at Birdsong. We plan to survey the property and locate as many gopher tortoise burrows as possible over the next year. This is all part of an effort to understand more about our resident gopher tortoise population and to learn how to enhance gopher tortoise habitat at Birdsong. We will head out to a given area with our group, line up, spread out and walk a transect looking for burrows. We hope to cover a lot of territory this way. Whether we find burrows or not, it is a great way to get out in the woods and really get to know the property. Wear long pants and boots for protection walking through brush.

No charge, but **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Group size limited to 12 people. Please call or email to reserve your space by 5PM on Friday,

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

February 1, 2015

**Weather** It has been a beautiful winter so far. We have enjoyed a lot of variety, with weeks of cold sunny days and overnight frosts interspersed with intense rain events all throughout the month of January. Today we are having a warm spell, with a prediction for a low tonight of 60 degrees and then tomorrow yet another rain event and a low of 31! So we are getting a spectrum of enjoyable and interesting weather. The rain events are a mixed blessing. We are glad to have the water table recharged, and we love to see the ponds and swamp full and the Wood Ducks present. However, we are still having a problem getting the Upper Pond Dam repaired because we need a period of dry weather in order to replace the lost clay, but it just keeps raining every week. We filled and placed sandbags at the spillway to help keep the high flow from eroding more clay, and they work well, until the next heavy rain.

**Beavers** The rain and high flow and drainage from the surrounding terrain keeps the beavers on high alert. They quickly re-build their north ditch blockage every night after we have torn it open to release pressure on the upper pond spillway. Their repair work is ingenious and very hard to pull apart – they drag in a variety of sizes of peeled or unpeeled branches and boughs and weave them tightly together while layering on masses of pine needles collected from the north bank and aquatic vegetation from upstream. They also add in mud and silt and pack the entire structure very tightly. It really works – they know exactly what they are doing, and it takes us a substantial effort each day to tear this well-designed dam apart. It is about five or six feet across, and we can only reach about half way with our rakes. Whenever I go break open this dam, muttering the while, I feel as though they are watching and waiting very patiently, knowing that this human couldn't build something that clever and effective herself, and knowing it will take them less time to put it all back together, with less effort and a lot less mumbling, than it does for her to tear it out, using tools. I have enormous respect for beavers. I just wish we could come to an agreement whereby they would apply their marvelous construction abilities to projects of our choosing. Unfortunately for us, beavers have their own priorities.

**Screech Owl** The little gray morph Screech Owl can still be seen roosting on its favorite longleaf branch on every cold day. It must have some ability to gage what kind of day we'll have before settling in. Even if it is very cold in the morning, but warms up substantially later on, the owl will not show up. But on a very cold morning when the day stays cold, there he is. This little owl, by virtue of his mere presence, continues to charm everyone who gets to see him, including Birdsong staff and volunteers. I pull over on my way in every day to see if he is there, and he usually is. As mentioned in the last newsletter, he typically sits close on the branch under a spray of longleaf needles, with his

feathers puffed up, feet covered, eyes closed, and head tucked down on his breast. Some days you can see his feathered “ears” up, some days they look more flattened. As the day progresses, the owl gradually rotates his whole body to continue facing the sun. On only a few occasions he has been seen to draw himself up tall and thin, looking a lot like a neighboring pine cone, but with his eyes open, ears extended, staring right at us. When he acquires this posture, the dark patterning on his face makes his expression look very fierce. He generally settles back in to the puffed-up state fairly soon and goes back to sleep. To date he has never flown away while being observed. We are still very grateful to Bob Dunne, who first caught sight the owl back in late October and brought him to our attention. If you have a good camera, this is a great photo opportunity! We will be posting some more visitors' photos of him on Facebook and Twitter as they come in.

**American Robins** Immediately after the holidays, we began noticing a lot of Robin activity late in the afternoon. We'd see birds poking around together on the ground out on the Gin House Field trails, and flocks of them up in the Pecan Trees being typically vocal and sociable. Going out after work to check on the Wood Ducks, I started noticing big flocks of Robins flying north from the vicinity of the swamp, along with varying sized V's of Wood Ducks. From that evening in early January over the next two weeks, these flocks of Robins grew in number, and finally I started making sure to stay late and see what they were doing. It was amazing. At that time, it was getting dark around 6pm, 6:15, so I'd go out by the Martin pole and pear tree right about 5:15 and observe. It is almost impossible to describe what was occurring. For the next 45 to 60 minutes Robins flew over in a constant stream from the south, over the Squirrel Woods, House Pasture, Gin House Field, and Farm Pond. They had to be coming from miles and miles away.

They appeared to be congregating in the trees of the Holly Woods and on our neighbor's property to the north. They were in loose flocks of around 70 to 200 or so birds, one right after another, in typical Robin fashion, flying in association with each other, but with no real formation, appearing very relaxed, with commentary and calling going on the whole time. What was astounding was the sheer number of birds that kept streaming in from far and wide.

It was a beautiful sight, especially in the late evening, when the sun was going down. When viewing them from the east, with the birds were silhouetted at just the right moment in the sunset, you could see an endless flashing of silver as the dim sunlight shone through the individual feathers of their wings and tails. Viewing them from the west as the sun was going down, out in the Gin House Field and looking back, the red of their breast feathers would be illuminated, glowing, stunning. Every bird was lit this way, as they streamed by in the hundreds...They were impossible to count, but trying to be conservative, I would have to say there were thousands upon thousands of Robins coming in to roost. Then at a certain point, when it became

almost dark, the stream of birds just stopped. Everyone was there; they had all made it. No one else flew in. The evening flight was over.

One evening I walked in close to try and see where they actually were staying, hoping not to disturb them but very curious, and got up to our Holly Woods line. They were still arriving and assembling and dropping in from the sky, being noisy and loud and full of what sounded like camaraderie and good fun! They were perched all over every visible branch and the biggest surprise was they were packing in to the bamboo grove on our neighbor's land. With all its dense growth and fine side branching this thicket must have provided a lot of protection and sense of security for these thousands of birds. They didn't show a bit of concern for my presence, and were very busy, moving all around from one tree to another, small groups assembling and flying in and out of the bamboo thicket, just a lot of racket and activity going on...

By the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January the sky was staying lighter later each evening. The weather prediction was for a huge rainstorm to last all weekend here; it was being called Winter Storm Iola on the northeast coast. It began raining on Friday and I didn't get out to look for the Robins after work until the following Tuesday, last week. There were still birds coming in at dusk, but the enormous influx was over. I assume that the Robins had some understanding of what was on the way, and had moved on ahead of this big system, probably south. These days it gets dark so late I haven't been able to stay long enough as often, but last evening, there were still several hundred Robins in the vicinity, still heading for the Holly Woods and bamboo thicket, but no incessant stream of birds from the south.

It was astounding. I'll never look at Robins the same way again. Why did so many of them come to gather in this particular place? How far away did they go each day, and why then turn around and come back for the night? What kind of communication takes place for an event of this magnitude to happen? Where are they now? Will they come back? We don't have a clue, but all those Robins probably have a complete understanding of the entire saga that surpasses anything we'll ever figure out. We of course hope they will return and we'll keep you posted.

**Land Management** The periodic rains have prevented us from getting our fire lanes harrowed. Chuck uses our Brown harrow, a very heavy piece of equipment, pulled behind the old John Deere 3010 tractor to do this essential work. With the ongoing rains, we are holding off until things dry out a little more in order to prevent any erosion that would occur and avoid the possibility of getting the equipment bogged down. Alan has the lanes cleared of brush and debris, so we are ready to go. We have plans in place for the winter-spring burning and would be pleased to hear from any of you who might want to volunteer. To be a burn volunteer requires being able to demonstrate basic common sense and be willing and able to follow instructions. It can be physically demanding. Please give us a call at the office or you can email me at [kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter](mailto:kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter) if you are interested. It is a fascinating process to experience, 6

you will learn a lot, you'll have fun and you'll get to work with a great group of people – the Birdsong burn crew. We'd love to have you.

**The Bird Window** We had a special sighting at the Bird Window on January 30<sup>th</sup>. Visitor Brian Savon saw a male Painted Bunting arrive and take a leisurely bath. Brian took a number of good photos and we will share those with you on our social media sites when they are available. A Painted Bunting is very rare for the Bird Window. I have been here many years and have never seen one. There are only three mentions of Painted Buntings at Birdsong in the 1950's and 1960's in Herbert Stoddard's *Birds of Grady County*, and he observes that we may be "too far inland for this species to appear in numbers."

Otherwise, we are seeing fewer birds than usual at the Window this time of year. Our regular winter residents and visitors are present, but we are not seeing as many of them. Lately there have only been a few Chipping Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers, when normally there would be many at a time. Other regulars include Gray Catbirds – we have four of them, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Pine Warblers, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrashers, Towhees, Mourning Doves, Robins and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. An Eastern Phoebe has been making frequent forays to the pool.

**Wood Ducks** One of our favorite Birdsong inhabitants is the Wood Duck. These sociable, vocal ducks vary their routine depending on the season, weather, and water levels in Big Bay Swamp and the Ochlocknee River. For many years they were on a predictable cycle, where we could schedule a Wood Duck Watch every January. We used to take a group to the Listening Place, get tucked under blankets on a tarp on the ground, and wait for the arrival of hundreds of ducks flying in from the river where they had been feeding all day, to roost together overnight in Big Bay Swamp. It was often a spectacular experience, watching the silhouettes of V after V of ducks rocketing through the water tupelo trees into the Bay, loudly splashing down and shrieking a happy-sounding greeting to all concerned. Then we had years of drought and a lot of change in the water regime, so the cycle is more varied now and the ducks' behavior is no longer predictable.

That said, over the last six weeks a lot of Wood Ducks (several hundred or so in smaller groups of 2 to 25 birds) were seen, late in the afternoon, apparently flying north from Lake Iammonia over Birdsong off to the river. These numbers have tapered off a lot since early January. These flights are not predictable; we have been trying to track them to see if we could schedule a program, but it doesn't happen every day. Chuck thinks that earlier they were getting flushed off the lake by hunting activity. We do have ducks that have been staying in Big Bay Swamp during the day and leaving at dusk. Several weeks ago upon our arrival they would flush and move to another part of the swamp, but now they will just swim deeper into the tupelos if we don't make too much noise walking by. I hope you get to see them.

Please do come out soon, especially on a nice cold morning with a cold day predicted, have a look at our special visitor, the little Screech Owl, and join the *Megascops asio* fan club. We do not know how long we will have the pleasure of this owl's company, but it is very likely that he will shift his pattern as the weather warms up. This is one of those unexpected opportunities that has allowed so many of us to see a wonderful wild creature in his natural habitat, right near our own, apparently unconcerned with our presence and attention. Pay him a visit and you will be smitten too.

-KDB

### **BIRDSONG'S BLUEBIRD TRAIL THANK YOU, ALICE HONEA**

Birdsong's Bluebird Trail is our longest-running wildlife management project. It was started in 1981 when cofounder Betty Komarek's Leadership Training group decided to set up nesting boxes in the Gin House Field to attract and support Eastern Bluebirds. They started out with 10 boxes, and an enthusiastic team began monitoring nesting activity that spring.

That core group of monitors in the early days included Larry Herring, B O'Toole, and Grace Miller, with help from other members of the Leadership Training group. They visited each box every other week throughout the nesting season and kept records on species (the boxes are also very attractive to chickadees, nuthatches, and wrens), numbers of eggs, numbers and condition of hatchlings, and fledging success. They also cleaned out the boxes after each nesting event and prepared them for winter roosting at the end of each season. As time went by the volunteer lineup changed, but Larry Herring remained the effort's leader. He took charge of repairing and maintaining boxes on an annual basis, setting the monitoring schedule and relocating boxes if necessary. Recorded data showed that the project clearly did support increased nesting success at Birdsong and it gained momentum over the years, thanks to its dedicated core team, so more boxes were periodically added to the Trail.

By 1992, it became clear from the data collected that predator guards were an absolute necessity, to prevent the high mortality observed due to white oak snake and raccoon predation. To help pay for the expensive "raccoon baffles" which double as white-oak snake baffles, the "Adopt-A-Bluebird Box" program was created. Adoptive "parents" pay an annual fee and can adopt a box in name or memory of a loved one, and a plaque is placed on the box. The monitors keep records of what occurs with each nesting and inform the parents of their box's activity each season. The predator guards work extremely well, and within a few years, every box on the Trail was outfitted. That year the 34-box Trail fledged only 23 baby Bluebirds; in 1993, with the new guards on, it fledged 65; and in 1994, it fledged 103. Learning what we did in the early years, we would never put up a nesting box anywhere for any species without an effective snake guard.

In 1997, Alice Honea joined the monitoring team. Alice had recently retired from teaching high school English in Detroit and moved to Tallahassee with her husband Gerald. Alice soon became a key partner in the Bluebird Monitoring effort. She loves these birds, loves

learning, loves taking photos, and she started writing beautiful handwritten notes to the adoptive parents on cards she made with her own photos of that person's recent clutch of eggs or babies. Alice brought her own personal and professional touch to the project and it has proved very meaningful to all of us who support one of these special boxes.

Our dear friend Larry decided to step back from his volunteer activities in 2005 at age 85. Alice became the team leader, with ongoing support from other core team members Bob Bearss and Dr. David Jones, who had been actively involved in this project for many years, and more recently, volunteer Myles Black. This team, with additional support from other volunteers, worked beautifully together and continued to expand the Trail to 43 boxes. Bluebird fledging under the care of Alice and the monitoring team increased to an all-time high of 210 in 2012, with lower numbers in 2013 (191) and 2014 (166), which seemed to be connected to the extensive winter and spring rains.

Alice has recently arrived at a point where she feels the need to step back from her responsibilities, and has formally retired from her position as team leader. She is turning over the reins to Myles Black and Bob Bearss, both experienced monitors, so the project continues to be in excellent hands. We want to give Alice our heartfelt thanks for her many years of leadership and for her dedication, intelligence, and love of nature. She has raised the bar substantially with her contributions to this special management project, and our Bluebirds have benefited, as have all of us who have had the privilege of working with her. We of course offer sincere thanks to all volunteers who have participated in this endeavor, with a special mention for Bob Bearss, Myles Black, and Dr. David Jones, our more recent core group.

I mentioned to Alice that we wanted to thank her for giving 17 years of service to Birdsong's Bluebird Trail and she wrote "It really should be me thanking BNC for providing me the opportunity for such an incredible learning experience." We wish Alice and her husband Gerald all the best and hope they will continue to visit and enjoy the wonderful project Alice has impacted so significantly. If any of you adoptive parents who have enjoyed your annual photo-cards wish to send a note to Alice, you can send them to Birdsong and we will pass them along to her. Thank you, Alice!

**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:**

***Program Volunteers***

Sandra Sallee, for leading *Take A Child Outside in the Wintertime!*  
Marvin Collins, for leading *Winter Birding at Birdsong*

***Special Financial Gifts***

Dr, William Dickey

***Gifts in Memory of Marion Smith Drake***

Jane Wakefield, Robin Brous, JSSNJ, Ward Kanowsky, Ian Spanier, Eugene and Ann DiSalvo, Laura and Chris Owens,  
Alan Golds and Carrie and Peter Drake

***Other Memorial Gifts***

Suzanne Speed, for Tom Woodward  
C. Tannebring, for Robb White  
Mary E. Esco, for Dr. John B. and Betty Smith Crawford

***Special Thanks To:***

Our friends Bill and Lyn Desautel, for rescuing us when the Birdsong truck broke down. They came and picked up the truck, took it home and repaired it and returned it the same day! They also donated the necessary parts and labor. Thank you very much!

Jody Walthall, Donna Legare, and their Native Nurseries work crew: Timothy Roop,. Lilly Anderson-Messec, Jordan Wilson, and Karl Berlin, for removing invasive species by the office and fencerow. They spent a morning taking out some big old privet trees and lots of invasive brush. They really made a big difference!

Vital Signs in Thomasville, for repairing and updating our big Plant Sale banner at no charge – many thanks!

All the young people from Decatur County 4-H and surrounding six counties, for making and donating suet cakes to feed our birds. We are well supplied!

Nancy Ann Thomas, our dedicated Friday Bird Window volunteer, for helping visitors and taking such good care of the birds and the Bird Window. We appreciate all Nancy does for us.

Alan Strowd, for volunteering at the Bird Window every other Saturday. We also offer special thanks for his work on developing the 2015 budget and his presentation to the Board.

The Candelario and Albritton families and friend Katy, our homeschool group from Valdosta, for their ongoing volunteering at Birdsong. This month they continued invasives and bush removal around the garden and shed. They made a huge difference! Thank you, Beth, for her kindness to the Birdsong staff.

Joe Peresich, for keeping our Facebook page and YouTube pages looking very nice, and for ongoing website management.

Tami Tomasello, for being our social media coordinator and managing our Twitter site so beautifully.

Butterfly Garden volunteers Donna Legare, Bob Bearss, Beth Grant, Myles Black, Yvonne Stinson, and Chris Alexander for keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful!

Jay Bush, for ongoing improvements to the fire truck.

***The 2014 Annual Appeal***

There were 101 generous gifts to the 2014 Annual appeal. We offer our sincere thanks to each and every one of you. A report on the appeal will appear in a later newsletter. Thank you.

**Birdsong Nature Center  
Board of Directors  
2014-2015**

**President** Joe Peresich  
**Secretary** Margie McInnes  
**Treasurer** Bill Preston

**Directors**

Jim Antista Dale Aldridge  
Woody Search Joe Newborn  
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**BIRDSONG'S CORPORATE SPONSORS**

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The Great Bicycle Shop  
Two Strong Women  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
Corporation Service Company  
Deerwood, LLC  
Cairo Family Medical Center



# NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG

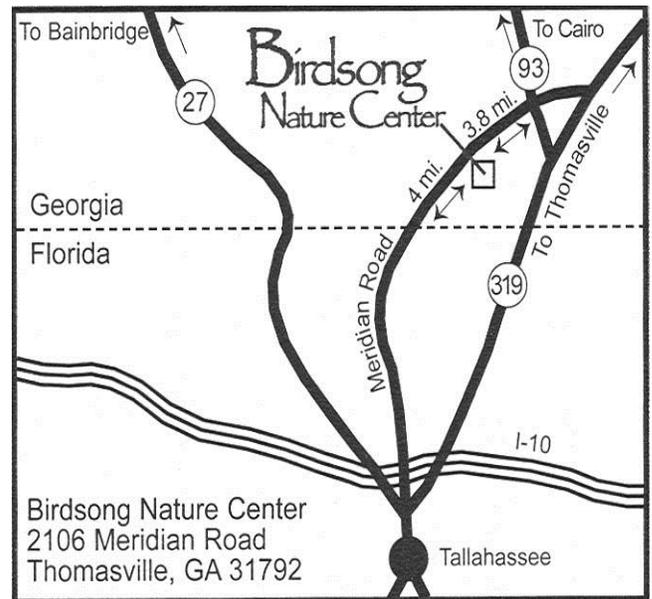
## Tallahassee

Alana Hollifield  
 Ruben Rodriquez  
 Rebecca Camden  
 Lauren Antista  
 Jane Smedley  
 Carolyn Cohen  
 Sarah Maxwell  
 Nelson Mongiovi

## Other Areas:

Aaron and Tiff Carroll  
 David Dickey  
 Jennifer Ludlow  
 Sylvia Walding  
 Eric and Barbar McCollum

Sarasota, FL  
 San Bernardino, CA  
 Sauwanee, GA  
 Daphne, AL  
 Thomasville, GA



### DIRECTIONS:

From Tallahassee: Meridian Road north, 4 miles past FL/ GA border (marked by a blue sign that reads Grady Co.), 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 Shell gas station onto Meridian Road, approximately 5 miles from Shell or 3.8 miles from stop sign at Rt. 93, on left side of road.

Watch for small sign that reads "Birdsong".

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