

Birdsong Nature Center

Jan- Feb 2019

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

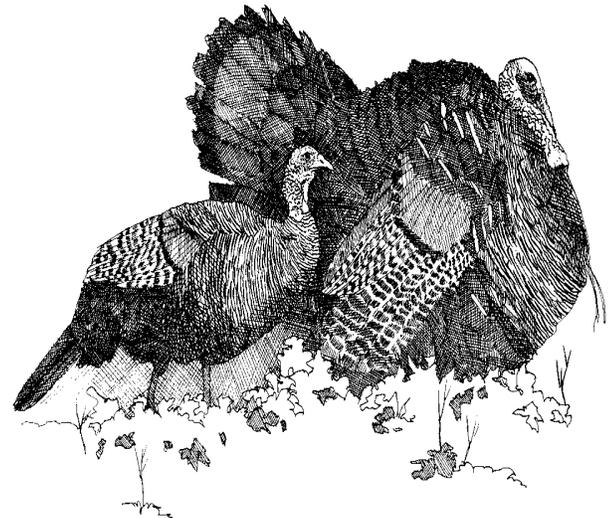
Fri.	Jan. 4	Center Re-opens
Tues.	Jan. 7	Covey Film Festival - <i>Journey of the Whooping Crane</i>
Thurs,	Jan. 10	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	Jan 12	2019 Land Management Overview
Fri.-Sun.	Jan. 18-20	Winter Ornithology Field Course - Red Hills Natural History Alliance
Sat.	Jan. 26	Leon Sinks Birding Hike

February

Sat.	Feb. 2	Take a Child Outside in the Wintertime
Thurs.	Feb. 6	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	Feb. 9	Winter Trail Ride
Fri.-Sun.	Feb. 15-17	Great Backyard Bird Count
Sat.	Feb. 24	Bringing Nature Home

March

Sat.	Mar. 2	Raptors of the Red Hills
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BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER

WEB SITE: www.birdsongnaturecenter.org

EMAIL: 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

Dear Friends,

As the end of 2018 approaches, I want to take this opportunity on behalf of our staff and Board to say a very sincere “thank you” to all of you – our exceptional members, volunteers, and donors – for your outstanding support of Birdsong Nature Center, and for making 2018 such a memorable year. It is because of your exceptional efforts and generosity that Birdsong is here today for all of us to enjoy, and for our community to benefit from in such a meaningful way.

Thank you for visiting the Nature Center to walk the peaceful trails, visit the Bird Window, and participate in the educational natural science programs that our expert volunteers so enthusiastically lead. Thank you to those excellent program leaders and to all the dedicated volunteers who help so generously with land management, building maintenance, event hosting and operational support. Especially, thank you to the generous and thoughtful individuals who donate their hard-earned dollars to Birdsong providing the vital financial support needed to keep the Center operating and thriving.

Thirty-two years into our journey, we continue to hold fast to and honor the ideals and core values that are the heart of Birdsong’s mission:

To foster awareness, understanding, and appreciation of nature and its interrelationships. Our goals are to educate and inspire leaders, teachers, and the public about the natural world through direct discovery and hands-on learning;
to promote a sense of personal responsibility for the environment; and,
to manage Birdsong’s acreage as a living museum and outdoor classroom by encouraging diversity of plants, animals, and habitats through the use of ecologically appropriate land management practices.

The wisdom of this mission and the goals it describes are as meaningful and important today as at any time in Birdsong’s history. We keep this mission in focus as we work to keep this special place thriving in our community – beautiful, inviting, warm and rewarding – available to all, young and old alike.

We hope you will join us for many of the fun and educational program offerings this coming year. Come enjoy the activity at the Bird Window and walk the nature trails that wind throughout the property. Many great experiences await! By now you should have received our 2018 Annual Campaign packet. The Annual Campaign is our largest fundraising event of the year and one we rely on greatly for covering Birdsong’s operating costs. Please help keep Birdsong thriving and available, now and for generations to follow, by making a greatly appreciated year-end gift – Birdsong would not be here but for your generous support! And please know that our hard-working staff and dedicated volunteers put each dollar of your gift to its maximum good use.

Thank you again to all of you, our visitors, members, volunteers and donors, for making possible this very special place called Birdsong Nature Center. We hope you will visit soon! Warmest wishes for a very happy and healthy 2019.

Sincerely,
Joe Peresich
Board President

**Put on your calendar!
Old-Timey Plant Sale
3rd Saturday in March
March 16, 2019**

PLANT SUCCESS STORIES

“First year sleep, second year creep, third year leap.”

This is an old saying about how most trees and perennials behave when newly planted in a garden. Now that the Birdsong Old-Timey Plant Sale is approaching its 12th anniversary many of our shoppers have grown their plants well past the “Leap Year” and we are getting reports of Birdsong plants taking a major place in the landscape of local gardens. Here are a few success stories.

Carole bought an Ashe Magnolia in a one-gallon pot at the 2010 sale. It was just a stick with a single leaf bud at the tip. Now it is a multi branched medium sized tree in her Killearn Lakes yard and its huge blossoms fill the air with fragrance in May.

June bought three crinum bulbs in a grocery bag at the 2010 sale. These are a prized variety called “Summer Nocturne” that Birdsong is lucky to get donated by a crinum lily enthusiast. The bulbs have multiplied and spread to form a huge clump that dominates the bird feeding area in her back yard.



In 2008 Kerry's neighbors cut down a hedge and exposed an unsightly view of trailers and cars in the next yard. Kerry decided to create a new barrier using mostly native trees from the Birdsong sale in 2009. The chalk maple that was just a slender wand is now a beautifully graceful tree, its slender branches full of colorful trees in the fall. No more trailers in sight.

Barbara got rid of some clumps of invasive mondo grass on a hillside in her Tallahassee yard, and replaced it with woodland phlox which has spread over the four years to cover and stabilize the slope.

Suzanne decided to make a rain garden in a low place that held water from runoff from the roof. She planted *Senecio* and cardinal guard which quickly spread to fill the space. Now she has glowing yellow flowers in early summer and red in fall.

If you are too impatient to wait three years for the show, the sale also offers lots of varieties of seedlings that will be a beautiful sight in just a month or two. Look for the "Annuals" section at the sale for sunflowers, old-timey reseeding petunias, zinnias, and many more.

For photos of these very plants see Birdsong's website. Thanks to these gardeners who shared their success stories and photos with us.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORK DAYS
Thursdays, January 10* and February 6
9:00AM to Noon

Typically our Butterfly Gardeners meet on the first Thursday of each month, but **in January they will be meeting on 10th** and then go back to their normal schedule in February. Please join this active crew of volunteers to tend our beautiful Butterfly Garden this winter! Bring gardening gloves, knee pads, clippers, and lunch if you wish to stay afterwards.

Our gardeners would very much appreciate the donation of bags of clean leaf mulch for the Garden. Please be sure that the mulch does not contain any stray invasive plants that might take hold. Hand raked or purchased leaf mulch is best! Thank you!

For more information call Donna Legare at (850)386-1148 or Birdsong at (229)377-4408.

THANK YOU, HANDS ON THOMAS COUNTY!

On October 20th Birdsong was a fortunate Agency Partner in Hands On Thomas County's annual Hands On Thomas County volunteer work day. HOTC once again sent us the best ever work team – a capable and enthusiastic group from Thomasville CrossFit! Led by volunteer team leader Frank Cienniwa, they charged in and methodically cleaned out the barn, the equipment shed and a silo, then moved loads of lumber from the shed to a space in the Barn, and filled a huge dumpster, all in just a few hours! This kind of big job would have taken us months to accomplish, even with our own great volunteers. This was all done in the greatest spirit of giving and camaraderie and we are truly grateful and impressed. We can't thank this team enough for their effort and for making it so much fun!

Thanks too to Angela Kiminis, Executive Director and Ali Harvey, Programs & Events Director at HOTC; they always look after us and we feel very fortunate to be included in these top-notch volunteer projects. These efforts really do make a difference to us non-profits in the community.

If you are considering joining a gym, definitely go to Thomasville CrossFit – you will get in great shape and meet some wonderful people doing it!

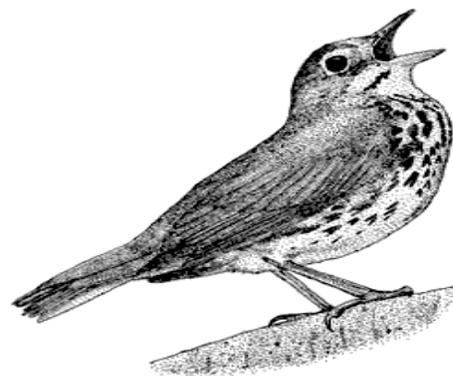
22nd ANNUAL
GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT
Friday through Sunday at Birdsong
February 15 - 17
Self-guided or join a scheduled guided group

The 2019 Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), one of Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Citizen Science projects, will be held February 15-18, 2019. Please have a look at the GBBC event description on their web page at www.birdsource.org for detailed instructions to create a free GBBC account for entering your observations. You are invited to count birds at bird feeders, in your yard, local parks or other outdoor locations, and then report your findings online at gbbc.birdcount.org or at eBird.

A guided GBBC count will be led by Sharman Franklin and her grandson Gavin Franklin on Saturday, February 16th from 8:30 am to noon. If interested, please contact Birdsong to sign up and plan to meet Sharman and Gavin in the Birdsong parking lot at 8:15am.

If you prefer doing your own survey, come out and observe birds anywhere at Birdsong, including the Bird Window, for a minimum of 15 minutes and up to as long as you want, on any or all days of the bird count, and as many times as you want. (Birdsong is open 9 – 5, Friday and Saturday and 1 – 5 on Sunday, closed on Monday.) You can turn in your own results online at gbbc.birdcount.org or pick up a tally sheet at the registration desk, go bird watching, fill the sheet out and leave it here at Birdsong and we will submit your results.

This is a chance for you to participate in what is now a worldwide citizen science bird count and you can help us by listing observations from Birdsong!



WINTER TRAIL RIDE
Saturday, February 9
10:00AM - Noon

Join Executive Director Kathleen Brady for a winter morning trail ride and enjoy Birdsong in all its winter glory. We will point out gopher tortoise burrows, winter birds and signs of wildlife as we go. We will make a number of stops to discuss Birdsong's ecology, land management and history, and explore places such as the Star Pasture, Farm Pond, the Listening Place, and others..

RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. Please call by noon on Friday, February 8th to reserve a space. We will be taking the truck and trailer and there is room for 12 people. Be prepared to be outdoors for several hours; dress for the weather and bring binoculars.

\$6 Friends, \$10 nonmembers, children half-price.

COVEY FILM FESTIVAL 2019
Thomas University Auditorium
Tuesday, January 7
7:00pm

Covey Film Festival is honored to screen *Journey of the Whooping Crane* on January 7th at 7:00 pm at Thomas University's Flowers Auditorium. We are especially pleased that this will be a regional premiere of this beautiful documentary and that Rhett Turner, film maker, will be joining us for a discussion. This screening marks the beginning of Covey 2019, the Festival's 7th season of bringing film and film makers to the greater Thomasville area to educate, entertain and engage.

Tickets are \$15.00 at the door or online.. Proceeds support the Thomasville Community Resource Center. For more information and to purchase tickets visit CoveyFilmFestival.org.

THE RED HILLS ALLIANCE
Winter Ornithology Field Course
5pm January 18 – 3pm January 20

This would make a great gift or a great adventure for a couple to share!

This introductory level course is designed for citizen scientists, individuals involved in natural history inventory work, and all birders with a desire to know more about those elusive "LBJs" (little brown jobs). Participants will enjoy a weekend of sparrow identification/counting, mist netting and banding in open fields at Tall Timbers, Birdsong, and possibly some nearby plantations (transportation included). We also plan to look for Henslow's Sparrows in pineland-wetland ecotones and capture and band Red-cockaded Woodpeckers.

Dorm style lodging is provided at Tall Timbers with double occupancy rooms, kitchen space and a living room for socializing. Breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinners are all provided for an immersive experience. Course leaders include: Jim Cox (Tall Timbers Director of Vertebrate Ecology program) Rob Meyer (Tall Timbers Red-cockaded Woodpecker biologist), and Todd Engstrom (Tall Timbers Research Associate).

The habitats of Birdsong and Tall Timbers range from open fields, old-field mixed pinelands, and beech-magnolia hammocks. Wetland habitats in Lake Iamonia and the Ochlockonee River are nearby, and mature longleaf pine woodlands in the Red Hills may be accessed for special studies. These habitats are rich in animal and plant diversity.

This fun introductory level course is limited to 16 participants and the \$350 registration fee includes lodging, all meals, and transportation. To register or for more information please contact Brian Wiebler, Red Hill Education and Outreach Coordinator, at 850-893-4153, ext. 6.

About the Red Hills Alliance...

Tall Timbers Research Station and Birdsong Nature Center share roots in the study and appreciation of the natural history of the organisms and habitats of north Florida and south Georgia. The Red Hills Natural History Alliance is a collaboration between these two organizations to provide participants with a better understanding of the wildlife, plants, and ecosystems of the region through immersive field short courses. These courses will be scholarly and educational in design and bring top professionals from throughout the natural science professions together for sessions of exploration and learning.

LEON SINKS BIRDING HIKE
Saturday, January 26
8:00 AM– Noonish

Marvin Collins, Birdsong volunteer, will lead a birding hike to the extraordinary Leon Sinks Geological Area. This site is recognized internationally for its karst topography and beautiful wet and dry sinkholes. It is one of the most extensive underwater cave areas in the world and connects to Wakulla Springs. The hiking trails are moderate to somewhat difficult in places but lead through fascinating terrain, from gum swamp to upland hardwood hammocks and longleaf pine sandhills and from one beautiful sinkhole to another. These varied habitats make for excellent birding, so we may see winter visitors and possibly some migrants. The site features some wonderful boardwalks and observation decks for great views of the many extraordinary sinks.

Meet Marvin at Leon Sinks Geological Area for this excellent birding experience at 8:00AM. From Tallahassee, travel four miles south on Route 319 from its intersection with SR61 in town. See www.floridahikes.com/leon-sinks for more information. There are restrooms at the parking area. Dress for the weather, bring binoculars, water, snacks and sun protection.

\$4 Friends, \$8 nonmembers, children half-price.
RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. Call or email by noon on Friday, January 25th 1(800)953-2473, or birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org. The site also charges an admissions fee.

**2019 LAND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW
FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Saturday, January 12, 10AM – 12PM

Join us for a trail ride and conversation about Birdsong's land management plans for 2018. All volunteers are welcome. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or a newcomer who has been thinking about volunteering, this overview is designed to give you an understanding of our long-range land management vision, and show you specific projects and ongoing efforts we'll actively engage in this year. This session is important for anyone who wants to help us burn this year, as well as anyone interested in invasive species removal, trail maintenance, and native plant and wildlife habitat enhancement. We'll spend the morning in the field and return to the house for lunch together. You will get to meet some wonderful people and come away with an understanding of how valuable your role is in Birdsong's management.

No charge. **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Call by Friday, January 11th to reserve your place on the trailer, or for more information. Bring a sandwich; drinks and dessert provided. Dress for the weather.

**TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE
IN THE WINTERTIME!**

**Saturday, February 2
9:30AM - Noon**

Bring your favorite child to Birdsong and let them lead you on a natural adventure in the winter woods with Sandra Sallee. Give an ongoing gift to your child: an appreciation of nature, a better understanding of the where they live, and use of all their senses. We will walk the trails to search for evidence of animal homes, sign, and winter behavior. Enjoy the fresh air, some exercise, and time with your child in the great outdoors. We will collect natural materials along the way and create a craft upon returning to the Barn.

\$4 Friends, \$6 nonmembers, children half-price. **RESERVATIONS PLEASE** by Friday February 2nd, so we know how many to prepare for. Includes a handout and resource list for year-round outdoor activities with children.

WOLF CREEK TROUT LILY PRESERVE

Visit Wolf Creek in February, when the Trout Lilies bloom...

The Wolf Creek Trout Lily Preserve is a biologically diverse 140-acre hardwood forest about 5 miles west of Cairo in Grady County, Georgia. It is home to one of the largest (about 15 acres) and most dense populations (nearly every square inch) of the Trout Lily, *Erythronium umbilicatum*, known to exist anywhere. The beautiful Trout Lily is a threatened species in Florida and rarely found in south Georgia. Also present are several other rare plants: *Trillium maculatum*; *Uvularia floridana*; Bloodroot; Crane Fly, Green Fly and Southern Tway Blade orchids, among others.

Preserve volunteers will be offering field trips to see this amazing site in full bloom in February. The peak bloom dates vary widely depending on the weather. Here is a link to the Wolf Creek website, where you can learn about the upcoming season's bloom, tours, and hours when the site may be open to the public. We urge you to go; this is one of the most

**BRINGING NATURE HOME
Sunday, February 24, 2 – 4PM**

In his book, *Bringing Nature Home*, Dr. Douglas Tallamy explains how everyone who loves the wonders of the natural world can contribute to the survival of our native birds, butterflies, and other treasures by providing the native plants needed to support them. Beth Grant has obtained permission from Dr. Tallamy to present his slide show on his findings. By acting on Dr. Tallamy's practical recommendations, you can make a difference for bio-diversity while bringing endlessly fascinating wildlife to your home. Handouts will be provided. Copies of *Bringing Nature Home* and Dr. Gil Nelson's *Best Native Plants for Southern Gardens* will be available for purchase.

No charge, but **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Class size limited to 18 people. Please call or email to reserve your space by Saturday at 5PM on February 23rd.

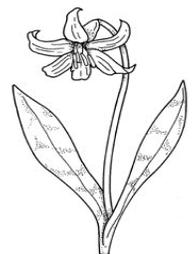
RAPTORS OF THE RED HILLS

**Saturday, March 2
11AM – 12:30PM**

Live, native birds of prey — hawks and owls — will help St. Francis Wildlife Association's education director Sandy Beck share their personal stories, the amazing adaptations that enable them to hunt and survive, the important roles these raptors play in Florida and south Georgia ecosystems, and what we can all do to help them. Your heart will soar with each bird's unique power and beauty. For adults and school-aged children.

After the raptor program, children and their adults can learn how to properly focus and use binoculars and then participate in an activity where they use the binoculars to identify nine common raptors by viewing their soaring silhouettes, field marks, and flying styles.

\$4.00 Friends, \$6.00 non-members, children half-price. **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Call (229) 377-4408 or email by Friday, March 1st at noon to reserve your space.



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

December 11, 2018

Weather Post-hurricane it has been mostly cloudy and colder and rainy, with 9.83 inches since October 11. We just had a long weekend of rain that brought 4.29 inches and flooding of the Ochlockonee River and local waterways. The ground has been sodden for weeks. There have been a few bright sunny days and some nice sunsets, but the last few weeks have been dreary and we are looking forward to the arrival of the Winter Solstice and a shift to longer days, brighter weather, and another adventurous ride around the sun.

Land Management/Hurricane Recovery

Any late fall land management plans were replaced by hurricane recovery efforts. We had hoped to get some fall burning done this year but it will have to wait until our firelanes are completely cleared. We have been extremely fortunate to have great volunteer support in this effort, led by Alan Parker. Jody Walthall, Donna Legare, and Chase of Native Nurseries have helped us, and Mike Carter, Jan Blue, Sandra Sallee, Mary Janik, Beth Grant, Karen and Ham Benjamin, and Bill Carroll have all pitched in with chain saws and commitment and now all the trails, and almost all the firelanes are cleared! These intrepid folks turned several daunting tangles of big fallen trees on the firelanes into manageable jobs now completed.

This heavy work could not have been done without you, so thank you very much!

The Winter Landscape The hurricane blew through in mid-October and we got to enjoy a few weeks of fall weather once that hot wet system finally moved on. There wasn't much color this year; not enough of a cold snap to instigate a burst of color in the woods. We did start to get some freezes and a little gold and rust and maroon started to appear in hardwood patches across the property, but it was very subtle. One color palette we really miss this year is the beautiful salmon/coral pink of sourwood. There are many mature and mid-canopy sized sourwoods along the Big Bay Swamp drain near the Wildlife Woods trail and the Azalea Garden. In a good year they illuminate the whole area with their deep pinks, golds and reds. This year the drain has a subtle golden glow – still beautiful, but we yearn for that deep rose-red. After the cold nights of the past few weeks, the color across the property continues to expand and deepen and we are enjoying it.

We did experience one notable pop of color after the hurricane, one that continues to delight and surprise us: all the pecan and mulberry trees shot out fresh green growth! The contrast with the gray and neutral tones of the woods right now is very eye-catching – it looks like springtime instead of fall! Apparently these trees had their leaves torn off in the high gusts of Hurricane Michael, but because it was still growing season they just sent out new leaves. It is beautiful – there is a fresh spring green canopy in the parking lot and Pecan Grove and in the gardens where the old

mulberries thrive.

It is still hard to travel around our woods and see all of the trees that fell. The damage was extensive, but at least our forest did not get flattened like so many places to our west. We now have many opportunities to observe the benefits of new spaces being opened in the canopy and new habitat available with every tip-up mound. We get to watch the process of succession from the very beginning, and we even know the exact date when these windows in the forest opened and when these tree roots were exposed! We can still point to tip-ups that happened in Hurricane Kate in November of 1985. Most of those old tree stumps are long gone, but our Red Hills clay can really hold its shape.

The change in seasons has brought us some interesting wildlife sightings. Alan moves around the place more than most of us in his day-to-day work and has been seeing quite a few Wild Turkeys and deer in several different places. There are a lot of deer scrapes, many with the big stamp in the middle; and there is a lot of coyote scat in the middle of the trails, full of fur and tiny bones – a wealth of information for anyone willing to examine it!

Beavers If you have been a member of Birdsong for any time at all, you have probably heard quite a bit about beavers. We are fascinated by them and they appear to really like it here – they live in the Farm Pond and Big Bay Swamp and down in the drains of Gentian Slough. They are a mixed blessing. They dig caverns in our earthen dams, and they dam up our spillways and drains, making for a lot of work for Alan much of the year. This summer we had the Farm Pond, Upper Pond and Big Bay Swamp dams mowed with some big equipment, and the operator had a scare when one huge tire fell through the surface of the Farm Pond dam into a beaver cavern. This meant we had to get several burrows scraped out and filled in to make the dam safe for hikers and the tractor. It was expensive. Now the beavers have thumbed their noses at us once again and burrowed right back into one of the areas we “fixed”. So if you are walking on the Farm Pond dam, heed the taped off area – you can see where another cavern has fallen in thanks to all the rain.

These are not new problems – Betty Komarek had to get the Upper Pond pretty much re-built in the early days of the nature center because it was riddled with beaver caverns and we had a visitor fall through one time. She used to tease Ed about it, because apparently he and Mr. Stoddard were the ones who brought beavers into the area back in the 40's! So we have mixed emotions about our beavers – we love them because they are amazing mammals capable of very creative and large-scale building operations yet they can cause a lot of damage to structures established by humans and it can get expensive. That all being said, we see their work, but we rarely get to actually see them in action.

Last week at the end of the work day I decided to go for a walk, get outside, get some air. I decided not to take the binoculars so I wouldn't have to carry anything. I went across the Gin House, which is always refreshing – to be out under that open sky, to see acres of broomsedge and a dark green conifer periphery. I decided to walk the loop around

the Farm Pond. I got about 50 feet onto the dam when a huge loud swirl of water happened at the edge of the dam – I looked up in time to see a beaver swim straight out from the bank. Right at that moment there was a huge splash behind me – another beaver was warning me off, back along the edge of what we call “the peninsula” – a spit of land created when the dam builders made a borrow pit on the east side of the pond. It is covered with a tangle of Cherokee Rose – the perfect deterrent to humans. The peninsula is riddled with old beaver caverns and is home base to beavers active in the Farm Pond. My presence was clearly unwanted and upsetting to these beavers. As I kept walking west along the dam, the first beaver swam parallel with me out in the open water, keeping an eye on things. There was a little silver bow wave preceding its unmistakable squared-off beaver profile, ears visible, paddling away with the little silver wave broadening into a trailing V behind it. Meanwhile, as I proceeded around the pond, the other beaver hurled itself into the water over and over again, making a huge splash each time, unrelenting. When I got up to the Upper Pond Spillway I could watch him or her in profile, and right when I heard the deep splash, for a split second I could see a little wall of water, with waterlilies, part of his body, a foot, the tail, all suspended in air, before it all disappeared under the surface and the ripples spread out. I know this beaver was very agitated and I walked faster to get out of the way, went up along the Holly Woods and then south along the Lewis Field. This beaver kept smacking the water until I was out of earshot - long after he could no longer see me. It was wonderful! They must have babies in the den to be making that big a scene and trying that hard to run a human intruder off.

Robins The Robins appeared in droves right after the hurricane. We haven't seen them in these numbers for several years. About three years ago there was a true Robin phenomenon at Birdsong – thousands (really) of Robins would fly in from all directions in huge loose flocks at dusk and gather in the tree tops around the garden, Pecan Grove and Holly Woods, talking all about it and calling and eating berries, and then they'd start pouring into the bamboo thicket on our neighbor's property to the north to roost. This went on every night all late fall and then they dispersed by mid-January. This year we are seeing lots of Robins appear around 5pm-ish up in the berry-producing trees and pine trees around the gardens. They particularly love the old red cedar by the house. It is such a lively, joyful gathering, very heartening to observe after a long day. They seem to still be roosting in the bamboo next door, but they don't show up every single night this time.

Pearl the Squirrel As it turns out, Pearl was a baby when we met her before the hurricane. We didn't see her for a long time afterwards, but now she has returned as a young adult. We assume it is her because of her beautiful silver coat, but she is now the same size as the other normally-colored squirrels that visit the Window. She is still a loner,

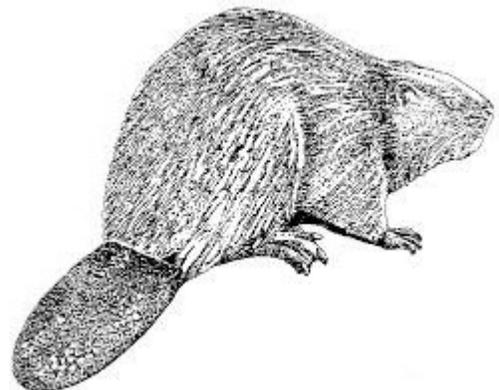
and is not welcomed by the others, but is clearly able to take care of herself. She is every bit as beautiful as she was when she appeared, and she doesn't show up often, but she is quite a sight!

Bird Window We are coming to that time of year when the bird numbers and variety at the Window declines somewhat. There is an abundance of wild food out on the place that attracts our songbirds, loads of ripe berries on the yaupon, hackberry, red cedar and hollies, so we expect to see more activity after the first of the year. By then the birds are happy to have a source of seed and suet available. Meanwhile, we are enjoying the company of lots of cardinals, titmice, chickadees, wrens and jays. Some special sightings include:

Perhaps our most unusual sighting lately is a beautiful gray fox! We haven't seen one come in on a regular basis for a couple of years, but this fox has been seen by a number of folks over the past week. She is very wary and approaches from the south side, makes her way carefully over to the suet feeder, walks her front feet up the cyress knee so she can reach the suet with her mouth, and takes it all away down the gravel path where she can eat in peace. Bob Dunn, our resident Bird Window photographer, has taken some stunning shots of her. We will see about posting some of these on Facebook or the website. They are amazing.

Chuck We miss Chuck. He passed away this time last year, on December 14th. It has been a long year without him. Chuck loved cold weather and bundling up and getting out in the woods in wintertime. Wild Turkeys were among his favorite birds. He went to great lengths to plant the area behind his house to attract them, so he'd love to be seeing them now out on the trails. He'd also want to be right there with his chainsaw, clearing the firelanes with our crew, getting things back in shape and keeping Birdsong “standing tall”. He would also be getting a kick out of all these robins and their antics and he loved the Solstice Celebration, especially the bonfire. Chuck not being here at Birdsong is like one of our big beloved trees falling – the landscape of Birdsong will never be the same.

- KDB



BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:

Our Very Special Program Leaders:

Beth Grant, for leading her annual *Thanksgiving Saturday Super Walk*

Memorial Gifts:

Patty Coulter, in memory of RoseMarie Brantley

Special Thanks To:

To those wonderful folks who brought chainsaws and tools and came out to help clean up hurricane damage: Donna, Jody and Chase from Native Nurseries, Karen and Hal Benjamin, Stewart Harrison, Mike Carter, Jan Blue, Mary Janik, Bill Carroll, Dwight Welch and Sandra Sallee. Thanks, Alan Parker, for supervising the clean-up and for all his ongoing work. The Azalea Garden trails, tree-falls on the fire lanes, and our main trails are now clear.

Carole Hayes, for preparing a wonderful dinner and breakfast for the highest bidders on an overnight stay at the Listening Place. Birdsong donated this experience as an auction item in support of Tall Timbers' annual fundraiser.

Donna Legare and Jody Walthall of Native Nurseries, for donating a fragrant Fraser fir Christmas wreath. Donna started this nice tradition decades ago, bringing a wreath with its bright red bow for Betty Komarek every year. Betty loved it and we do too!

Winnie and Wolf Adolph, for getting our gift shop ready for the Christmas holidays and making it festive, and for their ongoing work at managing the shop and stocking it with interesting, whimsical, and beautiful items that we all enjoy.

Our volunteer construction team, for continuing their professional repairs to the historic Barn. Their work is beautiful, and we thank them all: Glen Berman, Buddy Holshouser, Mike Duggar, Steve Kunst and Mike Brezin. Thank you for the repairs to the floor and doorway of the Listening Place, and the hallway door in the house.

The Candelario Clan, for donating paper goods and supplies – much appreciated!

More great books from Carolyn Cohen!

Bob Dunn and Wolf Adolph, for ID and photographic documentation of birds at the Bird Window; Bob Dunn for donating the beautiful coasters with his bird portraits on them for the gift shop.

Phil Gornicki, Bird Window volunteer, for helping visitors on Wednesdays and for his support on days we have a group visiting Birdsong.

Alan Strowd, special thanks for his accounting expertise and support on the Finance Committee, and for volunteering at the Bird Window.

Joe Peresich, for ongoing management of our Facebook page and website.

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

Butterfly Garden volunteers Donna Legare, Bob Bearss, Beth Grant, Ann Morrow, Myles Black, Jan Blue, Yvonne Stinson, and Emily Zeider. Thanks to all for the keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful!

Thank you to all who have already generously given to this year's Annual Appeal. We truly appreciate your kind support!

**Birdsong Nature Center
Board of Directors
2017-2018**

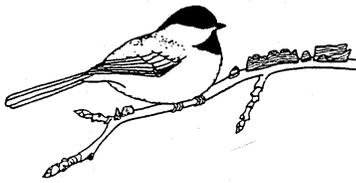
President Joe Peresich
Treasurer Bill Preston

Directors

Jim Antista Margaret Tyson
Woody Search Michael Brezin
Ellery Sedgwick

BIRDSONG'S CORPORATE SPONSORS

Hopping, Green & Sams, PA
Monrovia Growers of Georgia
Native Nurseries
Trillium Gardens
Carroll and Company, CPA
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South GA Low Cost Spay & Neuter Clinic
Seminole Alterations
Corporation Service Company



Birdsong Nature Center

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____

New Renewal

Credit Card Check Cash Paypal

Credit Card Account #

Exp. Date ____/____/____ Amount Authorized \$ _____ Authorization No. _____

Cardholder Signature _____

Name (Please print clearly) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Primary (____) _____ Alt (____) _____ EMAIL _____

Place of Employment: _____ Job Title: _____

Training, experience, interests: _____

How did you learn about Birdsong? From a member of Birdsong, the news media, word of mouth, our newsletter, etc?

Please be specific: _____

I would like to join the Friends of Birdsong in the following category:

- Individual Friend \$30 Bird Window and Nature Trails free during open hours.
Two free one-time guest passes.
Member discount on scheduled programs.
10% discount on items at the Chickadee Corner Gift Shop.
Bimonthly newsletter. Reciprocal general admission at participating nature centers nationwide (call for list).
- Family/Friends \$45 All of the above benefits for each member of the immediate household. Four free one-time guest passes.
- Friends of the Cardinal \$60 Five free one-time guest passes in addition to above.
- Friends of the Chickadee \$100 Six free one-time guest passes in addition to above.
- Business/Corporate Friend \$100-\$1,000 One free one-time guest pass for each \$10 of membership (ie., 25 passes for \$250) and recognition in newsletter. Call for more information.
- Friends of the Hummingbird \$250 Hummingbird feeder in addition to above.
- Friends of the Bluebird \$500 Bluebird nesting box in addition to above.
- Birdsong Naturalist \$1,000 Personal tour of Birdsong with Executive Director and/or Board Chair for up to 6 people. Call for more information.

I do not wish to receive any (above) benefits with my membership and would like the whole amount tax deductible.

I would like to support Birdsong by volunteering to help as follows:

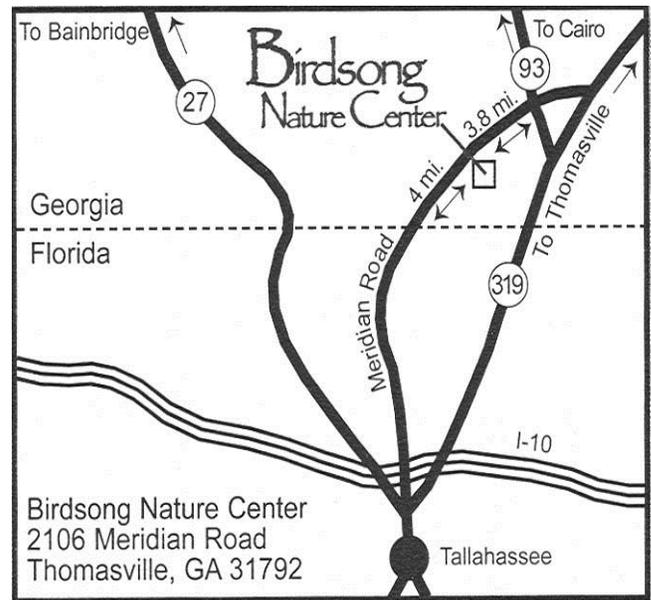
- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Window Instructor | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial/legal guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on Board of Directors | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greeter | (please submit resume) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Shop Assistant | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching (birds, nature walks, | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Management | stars, etc.) | _____ |

Memberships are renewable one year after the sign-up date. Members can upgrade to a higher category membership by sending the balance within the year. Memberships are deductible in part, depending on the value of goods and services received. Please call for information. Receipts stating the value provided and the deductible amount will be sent to those joining at the \$100 or higher level.

NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG

Tallahassee

Brian Andrews-Larson
Sally Russ
Michael Williams
Truel Myers



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 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*