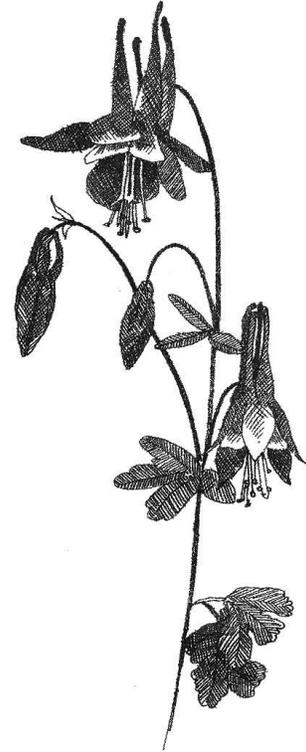


Birdsong Nature Center

May - June 2019

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May		
Wed.	May 1	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Thur.	May 2	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	May 4	Illuminating Site: Birdsong Window Gardens
		Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Wed.	May 8	Burn Ramble
Sat.	May 11	Volunteer Celebration
Sun.	May 12	Mother's Day Walk
Wed.	May 15	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sat.	May 18	Burn Ramble
		Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Wed.	May 29	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
June		
Sat.	June 1	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Wed.	June 5	Burn Ramble
Thur.	June 6	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	June 8	Summer Birding Tour
Wed.	June 12	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sat.	June 15	Gopher Tortoise Workshop
		Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sat.	June 22	Burn Ramble
Wed.	June 26	Bluebird Trail Monitoring



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, Birdsong Office

Fax line (229)-377-8723, or birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org

Dear Friends,

“Sometimes you’ve just got to go for it and hope for the best.” Such was the thinking that propelled us beyond the hand-wringing over whether to postpone the April 7th Sammy Tedder benefit concert due to possible stormy weather. Awful Hurricane Michael dashed the concert plans last fall and we weren’t looking forward to postponing a second time. We couldn’t have been more delighted to see the clouds move away and the sun come out on the afternoon of the concert, and it turned out to have been one of the nicest concerts we’ve had at Birdsong. We really appreciated the many hardy souls with the “go for it” attitude who came to the show. We hope you enjoyed the late-afternoon concert as much as we enjoyed having you all here! Thank you for supporting Birdsong and for being the friendly, warm, and charming group that you were. Thank you to the great dancers, young and “old”, who added to the fun. And very special thanks to Sammy Tedder and Mike Andrews for providing this wonderful benefit for Birdsong, for their fantastic musical performance, and for a truly unforgettable afternoon.

We have another fascinating artistic performance coming up on May 4 that you do not want to miss: *illuminating Site: Birdsong Window Gardens*, an elegantly orchestrated performance installation by Callous Physical Theatre featuring 200 beautifully handcrafted lanterns and choreography inspired by the plant and bird life of the Nature Center (see dance.fsu.edu/illuminating-site-birdsong-window-gardens/). In association with the FSU College of Fine Arts, School of Dance, this performance will be a unique opportunity to experience an artistic interpretation of nature and Birdsong. Do not miss this rare opportunity that we so eagerly look forward to hosting! Please see more information in this Newsletter.

Our sincere thanks to Birdsong’s awesome volunteers for their hard work and dedication, and to all of the Center’s members and generous donors. The Nature Center would simply not be possible without your exceptional and greatly valued support. We deeply appreciate your critically important contribution to Birdsong’s continuing success. Warmest wishes to all, and please visit soon!

Sincerely,

Joe Peresich

Board President



AN OLD-TIMEY PLANT SALE THANK YOU!

Thirteen was a lucky number for this year of the 13th annual Old-Timey Plant Sale. We sold the most plants, over 500 native azaleas alone; had the most people attending, with minimal traffic problems thanks to guidance by the Grady County Sheriff’s Office and our parking team; and made just over what we made last year for Birdsong.

An amazing, dependable, and creative team makes this complicated event possible for Birdsong. We count on our experienced workers who never fail to show up year after year, and on new adventurous volunteers who are brave enough to step up and give it a try. We thank the skilled horticulturists who grow and tend plants all year and the strong and tireless folks who do the physical labor of setting up the week of the sale. And we thank the artists who make it all beautiful and fun - - our creative carpenter Mike Dugger who built a little house out of four rotten windows and a door, and our snow-cone banner artists Wren and Willow Spivey who turned a cheap plastic shower curtain into a fabulous work of art. Thanks to all! We’ll see you next year!

- June White
Plant Sale Chair

This year’s sale was the best one yet (we keep saying that every year!) and we have many wonderful volunteers to thank. In spite of rain being predicted on the day of the sale we had a huge number of customers who flowed in all morning. Based on Fred Dietrich’s estimate last year, and how full the parking area got, we assume we had as many people, and that was around 1200!

In a short article like this it is almost impossible to properly thank the many people who volunteered this year. We could do a special edition of the newsletter just for that reason. This event is very complex to set up – we need to create an entire outdoor environment to accommodate all the beautiful plants, parking area, stations, checkout, etc., to make it as easy as possible for hundreds of people to attend. For those volunteers reading this, whatever your role, please know that your contribution really mattered - it truly was our best Plant Sale ever. Please let us know if I have somehow inadvertently left your name off – my apologies!

First and foremost, special thanks go to June Bailey White, Plant Sale Chair, for her leadership, year-round commitment and very hard work. Her vision for this sale has been realized over the past 13 years and continues to grow. June is the heart and soul of the Sale and her aesthetic standards, desire to educate, and her love of plants and gardening makes this Sale the unique experience it is for all our customers and volunteers.

Sincere thanks to each and every volunteer and plant donor who worked not only setting up and at the sale, but throughout the year:

Mike Duggar	Debbie Edgil	Becky McNeill	Lynette Joye Hitt
Mike Miller	Kerry Edgil	Keith McNeill	Margaret Tyson
Kristine Daugherty	Jeannette Boyer	Carole Hayes	Laninda Sande
Barbara White	Rick Cantrell	Sandra Sallee	Christie Langstrom
Ben White	Gail Sloan	Gill Hepple	Sharman Franklin
Lisa Reeves	Winnie Adolph	Julia Sawyer	Gavin Franklin
Pamala Anderson	Wolf Adolph	Russ Barrett	Duane Brown
Bill Anderson	Fred Dietrich	Annelle Lauder	Lynn Brown
Joe Peresich	Ute Schorn	Fran Rutkovsky	Mary Kitchens
Michael Herndon	Stanton Beazley	Alan Strowd	Scott Ball
Kay Hawkins Morris	M.K. Faircloth	Dan Miller	Teresa Adkins
Nancy Tinker	Bob Bearss	Beth Grant	Cindy Aho
Harriet Hawkins	Janeen Key	Yvonne Stinson	Cathy Drew
Betty Jinright	Brenda Coy	Mirhi Childs	Karen Berkley
Leianne Orr	Bill Preston	Donna Legare	Jeanette Sickel
Hannah Orr	Jim Antista	Jeanette Sickel	Eli Harbin
Fran Puryear	Ellery Sedgwick	Carolyn Cohen	Phil Parsons
Eleanor Dietrich	Albert Harrison	Mike Brezin	Lina Eubanks
Alan Parker	Martha Black	Buddy Holshouser	Bruce Ritchie
Gunilla Trull	Walt Martin	Cathy Drew	Sue Ellen Smith
Ken Misner	Betty Esco	Kathleen Reid Scott	Bonnie Spann
Jane White	Kitty Spivey	Don Abrams	Charles Spann
Maria Murphy	Willow Spivey	Claudia Mason	
Berry Penhallegon	Wren Spivey	Sandra Schneidman	
Clayton Penhallegon	Phil Spivey	Mary Janik	

We offer our special thanks to: Mike Duggar, for all his work on the signage, for building June's "Little House" and for leading the Parking Lot set-up day; Mike Miller, for his support with set-up and tree and plant expertise; our generous plant donor Pam Jones of Monrovia, for the beautiful plants they sent us; and of course Dan Miller, for his plants and special participation. Special and heartfelt thanks go to all those people who set up the tents. That is one of the hardest jobs of the entire sale and you each deserve a medal for service above and beyond. Thank you, Galbaby Scott, for organizing and coordinating the wonderful Preview Party. Although we got rained on part way through the evening, no one ran away and we just put on our ponchos and went to the food tent and ate and drank and were merry! We loved the Biscuit Boys: John Lovett, Andy Moorner and Bryan Murray – our Preview Party musicians, even though the rain cut them short. A very special thank you to Lagran Saunders and Ben Baldwin and team, for the beautifully presented hors d'oeuvres and desserts. They were extraordinary! Thank you, to all our volunteer oyster shuckers! Finally, a sincere thank you to Dan Miller, for his tremendous contribution to this effort. Dan works on the sale year-round, provides his great plant expertise, makes trips to north Georgia for wild azaleas, and is just an all around stalwart supporter - Dan helps make it a truly wonderful sale.

Many thanks to all our station leaders and their many volunteers: Winnie and Wolf Adolph, for organizing and managing the gift shop; Stanton Beazley, for leading and managing the cashier table; Carole Hayes and Sandra Sallee, and Gill Hepple for greeting; Brenda Coy, for membership; the Spivey family, for serving sno-cones with June's home-grown satsuma and Meyer lemon syrup; and all the many talented Plant Station leaders and volunteers including Dan Miller, Ute Shorn, Mike Miller, Ellery Sedgwick, Janeen Key, Beth Grant, Harriet Hawkins, Debbie Egil, Gail Sloane and Rick Cantrell. We really missed having our dear friends Don and Hazel Dixon at the lunch station this year, they had other commitments, but we do thank Mom and Pop's Hot Dog Stand for filling in – what a nice family!

Thank you, Gunilla Trull, for the wonderful publicity work in Tallahassee and plant donations, Becky Bracey, for the same in Thomasville. Thanks to Pat Pankey, for her excellent article published in the Thomasville Times-Enterprise, and to Martha Gruender of the Tallahassee Democrat for helping us get June's article published. Thank you to Carole Hayes, for donating the early-morning coffee, and for arranging the excellent catering from *Grits* in Cairo for the Thursday volunteer lunch - much appreciated! Very special thanks to Gill Hepple for bringing all those delicious home-baked cookies, bars, and tarts that helped keep our waiting guests and volunteers surprised and happy all morning. Thank you John Brinson of Monticello Nurseries for the donation of plants and trees. Thank you, Ben White and Lisa Reeves, for loaning us the Sno-Cone machine and for bringing the truck-load of carts and barrows. Thank you Molly Neely Birnum, for growing flats of herbs and vegetables. A special thank you to the Grady County Sheriff's Department, for assisting us with traffic control and for solving a couple of problems on our single-lane driveway.

We also want to extend a special thank you to our Corporate Plant Sale Sponsors, who generously supported this year's sale:

*Carroll and Company, CPAs
Hopping Green & Sams, P.A.
TNB Financial Services
Import Authority,
Automotive Repair Specialists*

*Monrovia Growers of Georgia
Chelsea Salon & Spa
Margret and John Brinson
Seminole Alterations
South Georgia Low Cost Spay & Neuter Clinic*

**ILLUMINATING SITE: BIRDSONG WINDOW
GARDENS**

Saturday May 4, 2019
8:00 - 9:30 pm

Join us Saturday, May 4 for *illuminating Site: Birdsong Window Gardens*, a performance installation by Callous Physical Theatre featuring 200 beautiful handcrafted lanterns and choreography inspired by the plant and bird life of Birdsong Nature Center. Joséphine A. Garibaldi and Paul Zmolek have gathered, pressed and dried local flora over the past year to create these unique artworks. Lanterns have also been created featuring images of feathers from birds that frequent Birdsong Nature Center. Performances by Bridget Close, Aaron Ellis, Calypso Haddad and Aigars Larionovs will be featured throughout the exhibit. This evening of art and nature provides a rare opportunity to explore the gardens behind the Birdsong Bird Window that are usually reserved just for feeding avian visitors.

illuminating Site: Window Gardens exhibits one night only, Saturday May 4, 2019 from 8:00-9:30 PM. Performances are ongoing and you are welcome to explore the exhibit at your leisure. The performance installation is \$5 or free for Birdsong members (An annual membership is \$30 for an individual and \$45 for a family).

Made possible in part by the generous support of Birdsong Nature Center and Florida State University's Facility for Arts Research, School of Dance, College of Fine Arts and Council on Research and Creative Activity.

\$5 non-members, free for members.

MOTHER'S DAY NATURE WALK

**Sunday, May 12
2 - 4PM**

Celebrate Mother's Day in beautiful natural surroundings on a leisurely discovery walk with Beth Grant. Beth can remember the first time she herself went for a Mother's Day walk here at Birdsong with her young son Brian 31 years ago! She writes "One of my first memories at Birdsong was in 1988 when my then 13 year old son did the Mother's Day walk with me. It was a wonderful present!"

It is a great time of year for nesting birds, wildflowers and the refreshing green of spring. Enjoy the trails and then visit the Butterfly Garden and Bird Window.

\$4 Friends, \$8 nonmembers, children half-price.

**VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION!
Saturday, May 11, 6:00 – 8:00 pm**

Welcome all volunteers! Birdsong wants to thank our extraordinary volunteers for their time, talent and expertise. Birdsong's volunteers – you – are the heart and soul of Birdsong. Please join us to have a potluck supper together and honor all of the people who have supported this special place over the past several years in any and every capacity: Plant Sale, Burn Crew, WILD Women, Butterfly Garden, Bluebird Trail Monitoring, Bird Window, Hurricane Michael Cleanup, Greeting, Program Leaders, Land Management, Construction Crew, Board of Directors, and the list goes on and on...

We are still working on the details of this event, but so far we plan to gather, introduce our volunteers, have dinner together, enjoy some evening trail rides so to view the season's burning, and perhaps take some walks to the Star Pasture as the sun sinks over the Gin House Field. We are hoping to provide some live music as well, but that is not yet settled. We will be sending out notices and updates by email and on Facebook, so stay tuned.

Feel welcome to bring your family or guests. Birdsong will provide beer and wine and grill artist Alan Parker will provide pulled pork and grilled chicken. We will need dishes in the following categories: main vegetarian options of any kind, side dishes, salads, and desserts. Please RSVP with how many people will attend with you and what dish you plan to bring.

We'd like to make this an annual event – bring your best dish and we may start to assemble a booklet of the favorite recipes of Birdsong volunteers! You are welcome to bring your own favorite beverages.

PLEASE RSVP by Tuesday, May 7 at noon so Alan will know how many people to cook for and so we can coordinate dishes. Contact us at (229)377-4408 or birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORK DAYS

**Thursdays, May 2 and June 6
9:00AM to Noon**

Birdsong's Butterfly Gardeners meet on the first Thursday of each month at 9am. Please join this active crew of volunteers to tend our beautiful Butterfly Garden this spring! Bring gardening gloves, knee pads, clippers, and lunch if you wish to stay afterwards.

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

GOPHER TORTOISE WORKSHOP

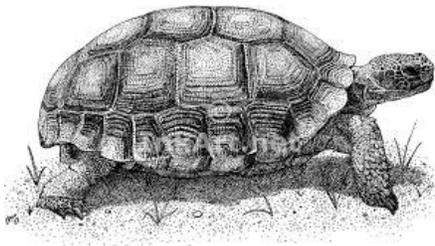
**Saturday, June 15
10AM to Noon**

The gopher tortoise plays a significant ecological role in longleaf pine and sandhill communities in the southeast. It is classified as a threatened species in the states of Georgia and Florida and is under consideration for threatened status federally, primarily because of widespread habitat loss. At Birdsong we are fortunate to have a number of active gopher tortoise burrows quite close to our trails so they can be easily observed.

Lora Smith, Ph.D., is a Scientist at Jones Ecological Research Center in Newton, Georgia. She is researching the effects of mammalian predation on gopher tortoises, and conducts additional research on upland snake ecology and pond-breeding amphibians. She has provided excellent tortoise programs at Birdsong for several years as a representative of the Gopher Tortoise Council.

Lora will offer an informative power point presentation on the gopher tortoise's life history and ecology. Our group will then ride out in the field to locate a number of tortoise burrows. Lora will bring her special camera that can be inserted into the burrows so we can monitor any activity below ground, which is always fascinating!

\$6 Friends, \$10 non-members. RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. This program is geared for adults. Call (800)953-BIRD (-2473) by noon on Friday, June 14th to reserve a space on the trailer and learn how you and your family can help protect gopher tortoise habitat near you.



SUMMER BIRDING TOUR

**Saturday, June 8
8:30 – 12:00AM**

Let's go for a combination trail ride tour and birding expedition at Birdsong! This is a wonderful time of year to see and hear birds in the throes of ongoing courtship behavior, nesting, and feeding offspring. Join Expert birder Marvin Collins and Executive Director Kathleen Brady for a guided ride to a series of destinations where we will stop and hike off-trail to search for courting and nesting songbirds. We'll wrap up with a visit to the Bird Window.

Dress for the weather, bring sun protection and prepare for a walk in the woods. Bring binoculars and field guides. There will be water available on the ride. Bring a picnic if you want to stay after the program.

RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. Call or email by Friday, June 7 to reserve your space on the trailer.

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

BURN RAMBLES

**Wednesdays, May 8 and June 5
Saturdays, May 18 and June 22
9 – 10:30am**

As explained in the Wildlife Notes, we are doing some remedial burning this year to get caught up and reduce brush. Right now the forest floor is greening up, new vegetation is emerging and this is a nice opportunity to wander out into the burned woods, off-trail, before the understory thickens up over the summer. Learn more about Birdsong's different wooded areas, see the effects of a good burn up close, find out what the animals are up to, and listen to the cheerful music of courting birds overhead.

Join Kathleen Brady for a relaxing walk and explore some of our recent burns. Depending on where we go on a given day, we may take the trailer. Dress for walking through burned brush, perhaps a few briars, and an ashy forest floor – wear long pants and closed-toed shoes – you will get a little sooty, but it washes out! Bring your binoculars, sun protection, etc.

No charge. Please call by Friday the day before (see dates above) to let us know you are coming in case we need to take the trailer.

BLUEBIRD TRAIL MONITORING

**May 1, 4, 15, 18, 29
June 1, 12, 15, 26, 29
8:30AM**

The Bluebird Monitoring season is in full swing! Our Bluebirds are busy nesting and Carolina Chickadees and Brown-headed Nuthatches are working on fledging broods. Our Bluebird Trail team checks nest boxes **every other Wednesday and Saturday**. Join our veteran Bluebird volunteers, Bob Bearss, Myles Black, and David Jones, for a fascinating morning in the field and learn all about Bluebirds. Call for information. (229)377-4408

THANK YOU, SAMMY TEDDER!

We want to extend our sincere thanks to Sammy Tedder for the wonderful benefit concert he played for Birdsong on April 6. It was a lovely cool evening and we set up behind the Barn where Sammy and his colleague Mike Andrews played beautiful music for an appreciative audience of around 85 people. Sammy and Mike helped raise over **\$1200** for Birdsong's operating fund.

If you weren't able to join us that evening, we highly recommend you go to Sammy's website at www.sammytedder.com and buy his latest CD. Sammy's music is so beautiful and relaxing - nature, music, and kindred spirits – soul therapy at its best.

Thank you, Sammy and Mike!

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

April 20, 2019

Weather I am sitting out by the martin gourds enjoying this cold front coming through. It is sunny and windy and the sky is blue. Our spring has been heating up lately, with hints of a hot summer to come, so we are savoring this cool day!

There has been plenty of rain all winter and spring, with a number of intense storms, but we now are preparing ourselves for things to dry out and for the humidity to go up. We just got through yet another dramatic storm yesterday that brought an inch of rain, a tornado watch, and loss of power. We've recorded 6.30 inches of rain since March 1st; our ponds and swamp are still full and the drains and creeks are still flowing. We had an odd, early-blooming spring and the big green leafing-out of the trees seemed sudden when it happened. It was nice to have an extended bloom of wild azaleas – it started early and lasted a long time.

Land Management We have been very focused on getting our spring burning done. These last few years we got behind on our annual burning for a variety of reasons, including lots of rain and high humidity arriving early, so we are engaged in remedial burning this year and our goal is to get 80% of the place burned. We are well over half-way there at this point in time.

Birdsong has a number of land management challenges, having been a heavily cultivated plantation during the Dickey era and then a cattle ranch during the Komarek era. The Komareks experimented with a lot of different cover crops beneficial to livestock including bahia grass and Mediterranean legumes and introduced the first improved pastures in the area. Bahia grass is pervasive across Birdsong, even after all these years. To this day we are trying to edge bahia grass out and enable native grass species to take over, a mostly frustrating task that is making us think seriously about using herbicides. Birdsong is composed of a mosaic of habitat types, some of which were established more due to fenced-off pastures than to naturally occurring ecotones, and some of which have a substantial and varied hardwood component. This means mixed fuel types, and hardwood leaves don't tend to burn as readily as pinestraw, and of course bahia doesn't want to burn when it is green. We use our bahia grass nature trails as firebreaks on the interior of Birdsong rather than harrowing in order to prevent erosion, so that increases the complexity of our planning and burning, having potentially flammable firelanes. All of these factors, plus an overgrowth of hardwood brush in many sectors has made this year's burning challenging.

We have burned hot to kill this hardwood brush, which can choke the forest floor where we'd prefer to have a nice variety of grasses and herbaceous plants as cover and food species for wildlife. We also want the forest to remain open so wildlife can travel through it in pur-

suit of mates, food and nesting/denning sites. Burning hot brings extra risk – we don't want flying embers skipping over firelanes into unburned areas, we don't want to harm desirable mid-story trees and shrubs, and we don't want to kill our canopy. Burning hot has meant burning in low humidity when the fuel on the ground is more flammable. Higher humidity results in damper fuel to burn through. As the spring progresses and the rains continue the humidity rises, and the vegetation greens up making it less likely to burn as hot. High soil moisture due to the rains keeps these burns from searing and possibly sterilizing the soil surface, so that is a plus.

What Birdsong does not have is any original longleaf or planted longleaf with wiregrass. All our understory is dominated by bahia, so, having experimented with burning in May and June and been monumentally unsuccessful because green bahia refuses to burn well, especially in high humidity, we are trying to get as much of this remedial burning done as soon as we can...we'll take it as far as we can go this spring until we are finished or until the humidity and green bahia thwarts any further burning.

So far we have burned from the Gin House Field around the east line and into the central drains. These areas are greening up rapidly and look beautiful. If you come out any time soon, the woods may look scorched to you, but we are very pleased with the brush control we've accomplished and by mid-summer it will look very different.

We are fortunate to have a wonderful volunteer burn crew who make this hot, dirty, smoky work rewarding and fun. This group is hard working, big-hearted, smart, and fearless, willing to do whatever it takes. We thank these special folks for their commitment and expertise: Sandra Sallee, Carolyn Cohen, Bill Carroll, Russ Barrett, Scott Ball, Karen Berkley, Stanton Beazley, Margaret Tyson, and our fire-lane maker, tractor operator, and all around wonderful guy Alan Parker. Thank you, best-ever Burn Crew!

P.S. I really don't know how we ever got by in years past without the radios Karen Berkley has given us. They make a huge difference! Copy.

Sightings Our burn crew has observed some interesting creatures while getting all this work done. Near the Spring Pond, the team was checking for trees – we try to rake around valuable snags and/or trees that are wounded at the base that could catch fire and then create more work. At one such tree near the Spring Pond, Carolyn was raking away, and glanced up and there at eye-level was a big mouse looking right at her from a hole about 5 feet up the side of the tree. Both were startled, the mouse ran up the tree, fell, ran up the tree again and in scrambling dislodged bark and fell again – stopped to catch its breath and come up with another strategy then ran into a hole at the roots. We all pitched in and raked and then burned a nice wide ring around that tree so any approaching fire would not get near this mouse's home place. It was a

a beautiful mouse, with a very white belly and feet – really pretty.

We burned through the gopher tortoise area this week and started by driving the mule around their “block” (we have 8 active burrows fairly close to each other near Five Points) making noise to warn the tortoises to go underground, which at least three of them obligingly did – we saw their back ends scooting down-burrow as we passed. On two occasions that day, Alan and I both saw several small rats dashing from one side of a trail to the other. At the end of the day after all had been checked and our crew went home, I went back out for a final review and at the entrance to one of the burrows I could see a small round, pine-straw-colored ball. Then I realized there was another one at the other side of the entrance. I approached on foot and saw that they were small rats, all tucked up, facing each other on either side of the doorway, like little furry sentries. They let me get pretty close, about 6 feet away before one scampered down the burrow, followed shortly by its companion. Early the next day, one of them was back at its post. We have not seen them since. I assume they might have been displaced that day and needed a reliable place to hide, so were staying close to the nearest burrow until all the smoke and noise and activity went away. Thinking about the two of those attractive little rats sitting so symmetrically at that doorway, I had a fleeting image of the of lions on the stairs in front of the library in New York. We’ll be watching for those bright-eyed little rodents in that area from now on.

Our latest burn was at the southeast corner adjacent to the gopher neighborhood. That burn was a little unusual, with wildly switching winds and gusts and therefore lots of smoke everywhere. We try to rake around as many snags as possible, but where the brush is too thick and is covered with tangled smilax vines it can be hard to get to them. We couldn’t get in to take care of a tall pine snag on the east line road. I was concerned about this because there were three good-sized woodpecker holes high up, indicative of possible pileated woodpecker nests. There was also a big hardwood snag on fire close by and we feared for sparks hitting the woodpecker tree up high. Alan got in there with the water tank and some crew members and soaked the hardwood down. After the fire went through and the smoke dissipated, we could see that that snag had been spared; the fire went right around it without catching. As we were checking, in flew a male pileated and looked into the hole facing south. The next morning, we went out to check on the situation and the neighboring hardwood was down and mostly burned up, no longer a threat. From a distance, so as not to disturb the birds, we waited to see what was going on, and in just a few minutes the male flew in with those enormous black and white wings and characteristic rhythmic wingbeat, landed up on the tree, made his way sideways to the door, out came the female and off she flew on her break and he entered the hole and disappeared. We could hear some light tapping not far away and after about 10 minutes, the female returned, landed on the tree, out came the male and took off, and she went back down into the cavity. So, we think this means she is

sitting on eggs and we’re hoping to get to watch them feed and fledge babies in upcoming weeks! This tree is easy to see from the trail, and we don’t want to disturb them so we ask that if you go out to watch, please stay well away and hide yourself so they can go about their work raising a family in peace.

Purple Martins We have six Purple Martin pairs currently building nests! That is double the number we had last year, so we are very pleased. This is a rowdy crowd, and they put on a performance the night of the Preview Party – right at dusk, after the rain had stopped they did their nightly high circling and calling and we got to see them all make the final big swoop straight down from above, wings folded, to rocket into the gourds for the night. They also made their presence known at the Plant Sale with lots of racket directed at our customers entering the tally line which is located right under the gourds.

We are now enjoying watching them building nests. A few days ago several females were working hard, flying around the House Pasture with strands of longleaf pine straw in their bills, being chased by other martins who were trying to steal their straw! A few were successful, but most of the straw made it to the gourds and today there are two with bunches of longleaf pine needles sticking out of the doorways. The martins seem to have a very hard time pulling and gathering the entire wad of straw into the entrance hole, hence the beard-like appearance of two gourds. We think there are four nests now being built, but there are at least six pairs of martins, so we may see more gourds occupied and wearing pine straw over the next week or so!

We are so glad to have our martins back and in these numbers. Their cheerful singing is heartwarming and familiar and can be heard at a distance; Martins just make every day better!

Please come out soon and enjoy a walk around Birdsong. It is nesting season and everywhere you go birds are courting and calling and building. We even have a Carolina Wren nest in the ladies room. On our recent birding trailride Marvin Collins recorded 23 species of birds, many identified by their songs. Yesterday I saw my first Summer Tanager male, out on our last burn, and there are Bachman’s Sparrows singing on the way to the Listening Place. The Cedar Waxwings are doing their best to eat Every Single Mulberry. Things are lively and beautiful; there is music in the air and we’ve got a few cool weeks left – bring your friends and loved ones and come out and enjoy this beautiful moment with us!

- KDB

BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:

Our Very Special Program Leaders:

Marvin Collins, for the *Springtime Birding Tour* around Birdsong

Sandra Sallee, for leading another well-received *Take a Child Outside for Earth Day!* and leading the Lighthouse Christian School group from Valdosta.

Our WILD Women (and Gavin), for providing excellent outdoor field trip experiences for: the Thomasville Community Resource Center spring break camp and the 3rd and 4th grade students of Deerfield Windsor School of Albany: Laurie Jones, Carolyn Cohen, Sandra Sallee, Sharman Franklin, Gavin Franklin, and Teresa Adkins! WILD Women rule!

Special Financial Gifts:

John Yow

Memorial Gifts:

Nancy McCollum, in memory of Mrs. Ruby Bryant

Alice Honea, in memory of Mrs. Kit Parker.

Special Thanks To:

Sammy Tedder and Mike Anderson, for so generously providing a memorable outdoor benefit concert.

Our fantastic burn crew: Sandra Sallee, Bill Carroll, Carolyn Cohen, Russ Barrett, Scott Ball, Stanton Beazley, Teddy Spencer, Margaret Tyson and Alan Parker.

Golden Triangle RD&C, for providing a grant for new burn equipment – our crew is so happy to have new drip torches, fire rakes, fire swatters, a new backpack sprayer, and special burn rakes!

Thank you, Karen Berkley, for yet more walkie-talkie radios that help us do our burning more effectively!

Winnie and Wolf Adolph, for their ongoing work at managing the Birdsong Gift Shop and having it stocked with interesting, whimsical, and beautiful items that we all enjoy. Winnie selected a lot of lovely items to feature at the Plant Sale and their booth was a big hit!

Our volunteer construction team, for continuing their professional re-siding of 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, Ellery Sedgwick, for the gift of lumber. Thank you, Mike Duggar, for repairs to the outdoor restroom plumbing.

Sunny Phillips, for bringing her Osher Lifelong Learning Institute birding class to Birdsong.

Kristine Daugherty, for her donation of boxes of interesting books on orchids and mushrooms and many other topics!

Bob Dunn and Wolf Adolph, for ID and photographic documentation of birds at the Bird Window.

Phil Gornicki, Bird Window volunteer, for helping visitors on Wednesdays and for his support on days we have a group visiting Birdsong, recent groups such as Buddleia Garden Circle and the TCRC students.

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 Lina Eubanks. Thanks to all for the keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful!

Bluebird Monitors: Myles Black, Bob Bearss, and David Jones, for getting this year's bluebird monitoring season off to a great start!

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

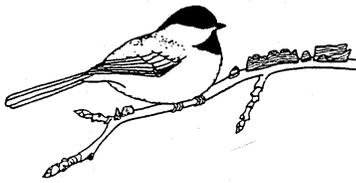
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Birdsong Nature Center

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

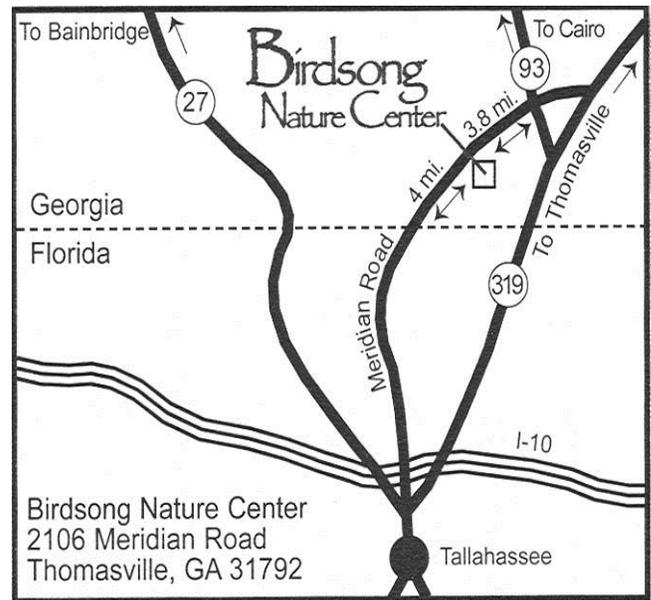
Cindy & Charlie Baisden	Bill Everitt
Gail Hankinson	Beth Christiansen
Steve and Della Wallace	Gill Hepple
Elaine Mohr	Joe and Carrie Woodson
Gregory Brown	Susan Strauss
Amelia Fusaro	Deborah Mayer

Thomasville

Paul Steele
Tom and Annie Collins

Other

Cindy Aho	Cairo, GA
Linda Rabon	Havana, FL
Nancy Palmer	Camilla, GA
Patty Barker	Boston, GA
Sally Dixon	Havana, GA
Don Abrams	Ocean Springs, MS
Charles Whatley	Ochlocknee, GA
Ray Scott	Havana, FL
Elizabeth Cooper	Havana, FL
Tim Troutman	Havana, FL
Hugh Waddell	Joelton, TN



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".

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

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