

# Birdsong Nature Center

September - October 2019

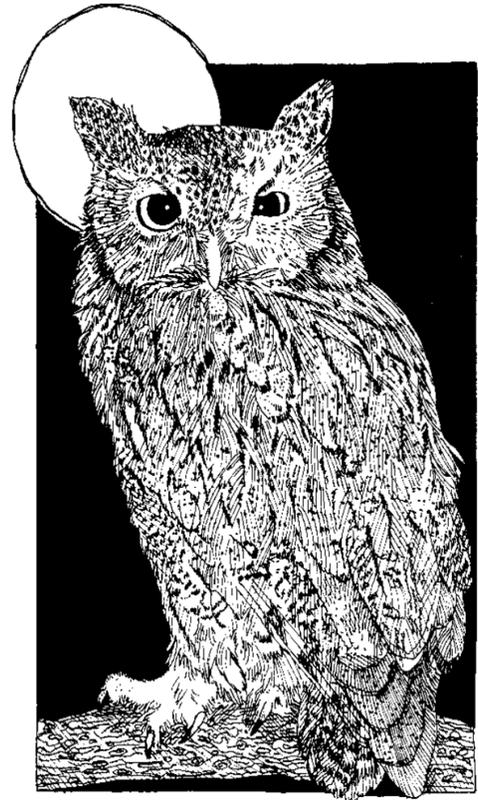
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### September

|              |             |                                  |
|--------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Sept.</b> |             |                                  |
| Wed.         | Sept. 4     | Center Reopens                   |
| Thurs.       | Sept. 5     | Butterfly Garden Work Day        |
| Sat.         | Sept. 14    | Moonrise Over the Ginhouse Field |
| Fri.-Sun.    | Sept. 20-22 | Fall Flora Field Course          |
| Sat.         | Sept. 28    | Take a Child Outside             |

### October

|       |         |  |
|-------|---------|--|
| Thur. | Oct. 3  | Butterfly Garden Work Day                    |
| Sat.  | Oct. 5  | Fall Botany Walk                             |
| Sat.  | Oct. 12 | Fall Birding Tour                            |
| Sat.  | Oct. 19 | Fall Work Day with Hands on<br>Thomas County |
| Sat.  | Oct. 26 | OLLI Birding Class                           |



#### 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, Birdsong Office  
Fax line (229)-377-8723, or [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org)

Dear Friends,

We want to honor two long-standing and very valuable volunteer projects that really thrive and show results in the hot summer months: the Butterfly Garden and the Bluebird Trail.

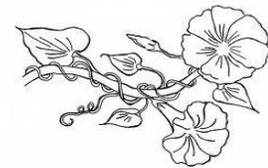
**The Butterfly Garden** is tended by a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers led by Donna Legare of Native Nurseries. Joining Donna, this year's volunteers include Ann Morrow, Beth Grant, Jan Blue, Bob Bearss, Mary Janik, Jo Garibaldi, Yvonne Stinson, Lina Gwynn, and Emily Zieder. This close-knit team meets monthly to weed, dead-head, plant and plan this beautiful garden. It is thoughtfully laid out and planted to feature a wide variety of plants that attract a variety of pollinators and that nurture all phases of the butterfly life cycle. Originally designed by Betty Komarek and Melynda Reid in the mid-1980's, this garden is a labor of love that just keeps getting more beautiful and more effective. It is a wonderful teaching tool that we use for all kinds of student and adult programs and groups, including the Hairstreak Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association. The garden remains an active site for butterflies and other pollinators well into October so make a point of coming out and enjoying this garden on your next visit. It is one of the main jewels in the Birdsong crown! Thank you, Butterfly Gardeners!

**The Bluebird Trail** was started with Betty's guidance by a team of volunteers back in the mid-1980's. This valuable project has been led and monitored over the years by many dedicated volunteers, including the following most active volunteers: our dear friends Larry Herring, B O'Toole, and Grace Miller early on; more recently Alice Honea, Bob Bearss, and David Jones; and these days by Myles Black, Bob Bearss and David Jones. Many others have also helped. These wonderful folks check the now-43 box trail twice every other week from April to August and keep detailed records on our Bluebirds and other box-loving nesters. Here are the results for this year: Brown-headed Nuthatches: 22 eggs, 16 fledged; Carolina Chickadees: 17 eggs, 17 fledged; Bluebirds: 224 eggs and 154 babies fledged! We offer our sincere thanks to the Bluebird Monitors – it is a very hot job to be out in the sun checking boxes all summer long, but these amazing folks have persisted for over 30 years and kept this project going to the benefit of Birdsong's Bluebirds! Please consider joining this team next season when they get started again early in the new year. Thank you, Bluebird Monitors!

Birdsong will be closing for its end-of-summer break on Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup> and we'll re-open on Wednesday September 4<sup>th</sup>. We have a nice lineup of fall programs scheduled for you and will look forward to seeing everyone when we get back from break.

Best wishes,

Kathleen Brady, Executive Director



## DROUGHT DEPRESSION

"Drought depression" is a condition that is becoming sadly familiar to Georgia/Florida gardeners in the summer months. It is that helpless desperation we feel when we see plants that we have hoped for and nurtured shriveling up before our eyes during scorching weeks of no rain.

At Birdsong's plant sale we pride ourselves on offering plants that are known to thrive in our difficult, hot, muggy summers. But the prolonged droughts of recent years are a challenge to many good plants that should be in their glory in July and August. Phlox, Shasta daisies, hostas, lemon grass, and crinum lilies that we sold with happy assurances of success at the 2019 March sale are now a sad disappointment after the long dry spells of May, July, and August. They will probably survive but they certainly don't look good, and we apologize if we made false promises about the glories of the mid summer flower garden.

At the 2020 sale (March 21) we are planning to have a good selection of drought tolerant plants that not only survive long droughts, but actually manage to hold their heads up and look good. Here are three of these plants.

Grey Rosemary, *Conradina canescens*, a plant now rare in its native Florida panhandle habitat, thrives in the poorest, sandiest soil. (One of its names is Beach Rosemary.) It never wilts, even through the driest hot spells. Its soft, feathery foliage is a welcome soothing shade of cool grey-blue. In the spring it is covered with white and blue flowers, very attractive to bees. It grows quickly and will form a mound-shaped bush 3 feet tall by 3 feet wide.

River Oats, *Chasmanthium latifolium*, is a native grass with long-lasting pale-green seed heads that dangle gracefully from arching stems in July and August. Unlike many grasses that get tatty and worn-out looking by the end of the season, River Oats is always lovely. (Though "consistently moist" soil is recommended by some plant information sites, I have found that it grows beautifully in pure sand, with the hottest western exposure, and not a drop of water for three weeks.)

Blue Glory Vine, *Thunbergia battescombei*, is a sprawling perennial from tropical East Africa. It blooms all summer long, from spring to fall. The hotter the weather, the more it blooms. The flowers are a rich, deep, true blue, not the disappointing purple so optimistically called "blue" by wishful gardeners. Its big oval-shaped deep green leaves surprisingly do not wilt in dry weather. The plant will sprawl or flop on the ground, lean on other plants for support, or completely engulf a tomato cage. It dies to the ground at the first frost, but reliably comes back in the spring.

Thanks to the creative scavenging of Alan Parker, Birdsong's assistant land manager, we will also have for sale chunks of pecan logs bearing the remarkable Resurrection Fern, *Pleopeltis polypodioides*. All year Alan collects the fallen limbs of

pecan trees that are covered in these ferns and saves them for the March sale. Resurrection Fern grows on the limbs of trees, but it is an epiphytic plant, not a parasite, and it does not hurt its host trees. During dry spells the ferns shrivel up into little crispy grey wads and appear to be completely and miserably dead. But within hours after the blessed rain finally comes, the seemingly dead plant comes out of its drought depression, unfurls its fronds, and swells into its bright, lush, new green self.

**Birdsong Nature Center's 14th Annual Old-Timey Plant Sale:  
March 21, 2020**

-June White  
Plant Sale Chair

**MOONRISE OVER THE GINHOUSE FIELD**  
**An Evening Walk at Birdsong**  
**Saturday, September 14**  
**7:15 – 9:30PM**

Have you ever been walking at Birdsong at night? Have you ever watched the full moon rise over the Gin House Field? This is your chance. Tonight we will make our way out to the Star Pasture and await the arrival of the full moon over the eastern horizon. Later we can leave our things at the Star Pasture and go for a walk around the Farm Pond to the Listening Place by Big Bay Swamp, illuminated by the full moon higher in the sky. Enjoy the stillness and serenity of a night walk through the woods, listening for sounds of wildlife.

Bring a blanket, portable camp chairs, binoculars, and a flashlight. You are welcome to bring a picnic/drinks to enjoy while we wait for the moon to make its appearance. Will require a little waiting, some sitting still, and some being quiet. If we have a cloudless night, this may be an excellent photo opportunity as the moon rises over the eastern pines. **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.**

\$5 Friends, \$9 non-members, children half-price.

**FALL FLORA**

**A Red Hills Natural History Alliance Field Course**  
**Friday to Sunday, September 20 – 22, 2019**

Birdsong Nature Center and Tall Timbers are hosting a new Fall Flora Course. This introductory level short-course on the Fall Flora of the Red Hills is designed primarily for individuals involved in natural history inventory work, citizen scientists, and plant enthusiasts. We will cover all types of plants, but we will give special attention to grasses and other graminoids. Participants may expect a weekend of in-the-field experiences and short lectures to expand their plant identification skills, with a special focus on the many grasses that populate pine savannas. Our field trips will take place at Tall Timbers Research Station, Birdsong Nature Center, and possibly some nearby plantations. The course is limited to 16 participants and the \$350 registration includes lodging, meals, pocket magnifier and field guide. Join us for this unique Red Hills natural history experience with Dr. Richard J Carter from Valdosta State University.

For more information visit us on Facebook or call Brian Weibler at 850-363-1079.

**TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE WEEK**  
**September 24 – September 30, 2019**

**Take a Child Outside Week** is an international program designed to help overcome obstacles that keep children from discovering the natural world. By arming parents, teachers, and other caregivers with resources on outdoor activities, our goal is to help children across the country develop a better understanding and appreciation of the environment in which they live, and a burgeoning enthusiasm for its exploration. Going outside connects children to the natural world, helps kids focus in school and reduces chances of obesity. Please see this website: <http://takeachildoutside.org/> for more information.

**TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE AT BIRDSONG**  
**Saturday, September 28**  
**9:30-11:30AM**

If you are a parent, grandparent, or friend of a child please join leader Sandra Sallee to celebrate *Take A Child Outside Week* and take a child on a natural adventure at Birdsong. We will walk the trails where we may find evidence of deer, coyote, or other wildlife; see butterflies face-to-face; search for doodlebugs; and watch birds go about their daily activities at the Bird Window. We will practice using all our senses as we explore what nature has to offer. Sandra will then assist the children in making a nature-related craft to take home, possibly using any natural materials they have collected. This program is geared for children and accompanying adults who want to learn how to better share the wonders of nature with their favorite children. Resource material on outdoor activities will be provided.

\$4 Friends, \$8 nonmembers, children half-price. **RESERVATIONS PLEASE:** we ask that you register by phone or email by Friday noon on September 27 so we know how many people to prepare for.

All memberships and renewals are \$5 off today - you may want to join or re-up so you can come back and enjoy more of Birdsong with your favorite child during Take a Child Outside Week or the rest of the year!

## FALL BOTANY WALK

With Guy Anglin  
Saturday, October 5  
10AM – noon

We are looking forward to this fall's wildflower bloom. It will be fascinating to see what kind of response we get after this spring's abundant rains. Please join us for a leisurely botany hike led by Guy Anglin. Guy is well qualified to help us learn about southeastern plant life and ecology, having had decades of experience working for many of the key agencies in Florida that protect our natural resources. For much of his career Guy was the Forest Botanist-Ecologist for the U.S. Forest Service, coordinating ecosystems management in three of our National Forests here in Florida, the Osceola, Apalachicola, and Ocala. His main interest is restoration ecology and he and his wife Jan Blue are working to restore longleaf pine and native groundcover to their land, which they have placed in conservation easement with Tall Timbers Research Station.

We know you will benefit from a walk in the woods with Guy and enjoy learning about Birdsong's fall blooming wildflowers. RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. Call or email by Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at noon to reserve your space. Dress for the weather and for walking, possibly off-trail. Bring any questions you might have about fall botany and ecology – Guy can help you. We'll start at 10am and go as long as our guests are interested. You are welcome to bring lunch and have a picnic afterwards.

\$5 Members, \$9 non-members. Geared for adults.

## DEERFIELD-WINDSOR LOWER SCHOOL Spring Field Trips 2019

We want to say a special thank you to Deerfield-Windsor Lower School of Albany, Georgia. The school's CFO donated a special gift to enable students to go on meaningful science and nature field trips and Birdsong was the first place they chose to go! Science Teacher Christie Eakes brought three classes to Birdsong this spring to learn about nature and natural science. Our WILD Women (and Gavin) worked with these wonderful third, fourth and fifth grade students, taking them on nature walks, visiting the Bird Window, working at the activities table on ecogames, and building a beaver! We were extremely impressed not only with the bright, enthusiastic, eager-to-learn students in each class but with their teachers as well. We have received a beautiful memento of their visit here – a bound book of color photos that documents their adventure. They also sent written accounts of their experiences that are delightful to read.

We are honored that Mrs. Eakes and her team chose Birdsong Nature Center for this series of inaugural field trips. We thank her and all the students for being so much fun to work with, for the beautiful book, and we thank Mr. Larry Jordan for his visionary Legacy Gift.

## FALL BIRDING TOUR

Saturday, October 12  
8:30 – 12:00AM

Let's go for a combination trail ride tour and birding expedition at Birdsong. Fall is a wonderful time of year to see and hear migrant and resident birds as they enjoy the fall harvest of seeds and berries! 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 birds. We'll go to a variety of good birding habitat including open oldfield, pine woods, swamp and mixed hardwoods. We'll visit the Farm Pond, the Live Oak Hammock, Linton's Corner, the longleaf pine site, the east line firelane, and possibly others, depending how far we get. 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, October 11<sup>th</sup> to reserve your space on the trailer.

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

## Summer Trail Ride List of Birds Observed or Heard July 20, 2019 8:30 – 11:30am Led by Marvin Collins

Northern Bobwhite  
Anhinga  
Great Egret  
Little Blue Heron  
Black Vulture  
Common Ground Dove  
Mourning Dove  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Red-headed Woodpecker  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Eastern Wood Pewee  
Eastern Kingbird  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Tufted Titmouse  
White-breasted Nuthatch  
Brown-headed Nuthatch  
Carolina Wren  
Northern Mockingbird  
Pine Warbler  
Eastern Towhee  
Bachman's Sparrow  
Northern Cardinal

## Quotes from a letter received from a Deerfield-Windsor student:

"I went on a field trip to Birdsong Nature Reserve. I had a ton of fun! Our tour guides were really nice and funny! We went in this really old house from the 1800's. It had all sorts of awesome stuff like the biggest pine cones I'd ever seen. There was also this skeleton thingy that looked like a pufferfish. There were also tons of cool rocks! The volunteers were going to do a prescribed burn to make a good habitat for the animals. In the bathroom there was a leaky pipe. On our nature walk I found half of a bird egg!"

"My favorite part of the trip was the bird window. The lady that lived in the old house knocked out a whole wall and replaced it with plateglass! She made the area outside a beautiful garden! She made this cool rocky hill and ran a pipe through it. We saw so many different birds! I will remember this field trip forever!"

By Finn Fickel

### **VOLUNTEERS: FALL WORK DAY WITH *HANDS ON THOMAS COUNTY!***

**Saturday, October 19, 9 AM – noon**

Please join us for a busy volunteer event at Birdsong. This is a big day for **Hands On Thomas County** – every fall they send teams of hard-working volunteers to non-profits in need of help and we are one of those fortunate organizations on their list! We can use many more hands to clean up the farm equipment shed, the back of the barn, spruce up the House Garden and help with invasive plant removal. We'll no doubt have additional projects to add by then - something for everyone! You will get to meet a lot of nice people - HOTC volunteers are the best! So please come on out, bring your work gloves, loppers, shovels, and enthusiasm and help give Birdsong a fall makeover! Thank you, Angela Kiminis, Executive Director of HOTC and Ali Harvey, Programs and Events Director, for including Birdsong in this wonderful community improvement day. Call or email for more information: (229-377-4408) or [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org).

### **BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORK DAY Thursdays, September 5 and October 3 9:00AM to Noon**

Birdsong's Butterfly Gardeners meet on the first Thursday of each month at 9am.

Please join this accomplished and active crew of volunteers to tend our beautiful Butterfly Garden! 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.

### **COVEY FILM FESTIVAL Coming in October!**

Please have a look at the Covey Film Festival website at <https://coveyfilmfestival> to see what amazing films and related programs they will be bringing to Thomasville this fall. The funds raised by this worthwhile and entertaining festival go to the Thomasville Community Resource Center, which provides excellent after school and school break educational opportunities for over 500 children. Birdsong and TCRC are partners in providing field trips for these students, thanks to a grant from the Thomasville Antiques Show Foundation. Covey Film Festival is a great cause to support – we'll see you there!

### **List of Butterfly Species Observed On July 6, 2019 Hairstreak Chapter, NABA Dave McElveen, Leader**

Giant Swallowtail  
Spicebush Swallowtail  
Pipevine Swallowtail  
Pearl Crescent  
Northern Cloudywing  
Long-tailed Skipper  
Carolina Satyr  
Clouded Skipper  
Whirlabout  
Horace's Duskywing  
Buckeye  
Southern Skippering



## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

August 4, 2019

**Weather** We need rain. We have gotten the occasional shower here and there recently, but we only had 3.32 inches of rain in July with 6 rain events, compared to 4.72 inches of rain in June with 10 rain events. There have been a lot of storms come through the area, mostly north of us, with impressive nighttime lightning shows illuminating enormous thunderheads, but very little rain has reached Birdsong. The lawn around the house and gardens is getting crispy and many shrubs are wilting by mid-day. One beneficial aspect of this most recent dry spell is the lower humidity...it has actually been very pleasant in the mornings. So our hot summer rolls on and we keep wishing for rain.

**Land Management** We've been enjoying watching the place green up and get leafy after our hot burning this season. The summer rains up till recently have enabled a lot of growth and the vegetation looks good and does not appear to be suffering. In some places you can hardly tell that we burned as hot as we did this spring. In the wooded areas that have been burned annually, like the Squirrel Woods and south House Pasture, there is a nice abundance of diverse understory plants. We are pleased and are looking forward to this fall's wildflower season. Right now we are seeing blooming *Tephrosia*, Butterfly Pea, Partridge Pea, Rock Roses, Rabbit Bells, and Wild Petunia and big patches of *Eupatorium* getting ready to bloom. The Gin House Field, also burned annually, is a beautiful expanse of green and looks really nice until you get up close and can see how much winged sumac and briars made it through our hot burning. Now that patches of sumac are beginning to bloom, Alan will go in and mow progressively as these areas flower over the next month or so. This helps cut back on this particular woody plant – Chuck experimented with this targeted mowing of sumac in bloom and it made a difference the following year. Briars are another story – they are tenacious. We are being forced to consider an herbicide plan. We don't mind some patches of these good wildlife food plants, but they are taking over too much of the field. We want a nice variety of grasses and other flowering, fruiting and seeding plants to support lots of pollinators and other wildlife, but we want the plant species that don't overwhelm and dominate the diverse old field habitat we are trying to nurture. We have seen a lot of *Agalinis* coming up – it will bloom in a month or so - and right now there is some *Sabatia* in the Gin House. We haven't seen that here before; it is blooming as usual over on the west side of the Farm Pond.

In areas where we did our remedial hot burning to knock back heavy brush you can still tell we burned – there are lots of tall dead burned stalks - but it is amazing how much vegetation has sprung back. We anticipated this and have approached the problem with a three-year plan. We will need to keep up the pressure with annual burning in

some areas, accompanied by mowing, for the next two years before we can really get some of these places back in shape. Alan is now going in and mowing in some of these locations to help open up the woods and allow the sun to reach the forest floor. It is making a big difference and we are pleased with our progress.

**Sightings** We are seeing lots of Wild Turkeys and finding feathers on the trails! Over the past few years we did not see that many turkeys out on the place, which was unusual for Birdsong, and we've missed them a lot. Chuck used to watch big flocks of them come to his back yard (he planted a small food plot for them back there). This summer, we are seeing them fairly frequently and on a number of walks, I have found all kinds of turkey feathers, sometimes in clusters, including wing and tail feathers, on the trails. (Have you ever had the opportunity to really examine a turkey breast/neck feather? At first glance the feather looks brown, with a somewhat coppery gleam to it. If you move it around in the sunlight – it lights up! There is fire in a turkey feather! It is one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen – brilliant gleaming orange and copper and green, sometimes there will be a fire-opal blue or turquoise as you move the feather around in the sunlight. Spectacular. If I were a female turkey and a male was showing off a whole array of feathers like those? I'd be a goner. Done deal.) We are delighted to be seeing turkeys again and finding these jewels they leave us. We can't help but think that our burning has enabled the adults to move more easily through and around the woods where they can search for a variety of foods and expand their activities. Just a few days ago I saw a group of four adult turkeys moving from the recently burned Shortleaf Woods across the trail to the now-burned-and-mowed Wildlife Woods. They seemed very comfortable wandering slowly around in there.

We have also been hearing a lot of Bobwhite quail calling around the property and have been getting reports from visitors who are flushing more quail than before...we think this might also be related to opening up the woods. It is kind of nice to hear a quail calling from the same place most days – nice to know they have a place of their own. This calling is particularly noticeable in the House Pasture, the Squirrel Woods, the Big Bay Field/longleaf pine area, and the Gin House Field. We always hope that a pair will bring their babies in to the Bird Window again. It has been a long time since we've seen that, but what an image – all those tiny little birds tucked under their mother's skirts as she tries to eat some corn! We are ever hopeful!

We are also flushing deer regularly. For health reasons I have been trying to go for a walk after work, and in the past week I have flushed at least 4 deer. They tend to be young, smallish, but are very offended by having their nap interrupted and they snort and snort about it! I startled a little fawn the other day, and he galloped off and stopped and snorted at me, as offended as any adult!

Another number of sightings we think might be related to this year's burning includes seeing gopher tortoises on the trail! Usually these loveable turtles are very shy, smart about keeping out of sight, and if you approach one sitting on its front porch it will often fling itself down the burrow, clonking its way out of sight. On my walk I will often pass the 5-Points intersection where a tortoise has had a burrow for many years. Lately, I have walked up quietly just to say hello, and have found him or her sideways in the burrow, just a few inches inside – not in a hurry to hide. A few weeks ago near 5-Points I encountered a medium sized gopher tortoise crossing the trail. It was in very good condition, about 7 inches long. It stopped hiking when I showed up – we communed for a moment and I went on my way. Last week in almost the same spot, I saw a tiny little gopher, only three inches long. To see this little creature better and because I just could not resist, I picked it up for a closer look. It was a little female, with her flat plastron, and she was not pleased about this – she promptly tinkled on me. She had her front legs pulled in close and peered out from between her wrists. The scales on her little legs, her toenails, and her shell were coated in a fine layer of red dust and clay – she had been digging. I set her down where I found her and moved on. I am so pleased to know that we have gopher tortoise regeneration going on. It really is a treat to get to see these creatures going about their lives and we hope that our management efforts are improving their habitat.

If you go walking and get to see any of these wonderful animals, please let us know back at the office – we want to keep track of such sightings.

**Purple Martins** Great news: our last three gourds of babies made it! Two of three sets were out and flying by the middle of June and the last gourd of two babies fledged on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, just like old times! We really enjoyed their last few weeks – a big crew of visiting martins from another colony came by frequently and filled the House Pasture with joyful noise and wild flying – it was delightful. Our last babies were out and holding their own up in the pecan trees and continued to be fed while periodically taking flying forays around the Barn. We did use the sprayer almost every afternoon that last week to help keep everyone cool, so we hope that helped with their successful departure. Overall, it was a good season for our Purple Martins and we wish them a safe journey back to Brasil!

**Bird Window** The Bird Window is typically an active place this time of year; resident birds bring their babies in and teach them about the Bird Window. We have Cardinals in droves right now and a family of Red-bellied Woodpeckers. These are the woodpeckers that are long-time Bird Window regulars. Mirhi has named them: Henry is the adult male, the dad, who drills on the metal flashing on the roof if Mirhi isn't there in time with the

corn and suet; Henrietta is the female – we see her less frequently and she is much more shy. They have recently been bringing their offspring to the Window to learn all about suet: Hank is the boy, Hanna is the girl. The other day all four were there, a rarity. Meanwhile our other many resident birds have been busy at the Window, including some very active Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, and the usual crew of regulars: Towhees, Jays, Carolina Wrens, Tufted Titmice, Chickadees, Mockingbird, Crows and Mourning Doves. Other interesting visitors to the seed, suet or water include Blue Grosbeaks, Ground Doves, Indigo Buntings, Yellow-throated Vireo, Northern Parula, Summer Tanager, and Wood Thrush.

In late June early July we had one of our most peculiar sightings in a long time: two Black Vultures. Several of us saw them off and on that week. I was astounded to see those two enormous birds at the Window – what a surprise! They were sitting close together in front of the pool, interested in the corn. One was sitting right in the dish and the other was sitting back on its heels close by. I was struck by how big their feet are. When you are used to only songbirds, or at the most a crow, vultures at the Bird Window are really an anomaly. Watching them, I came to the conclusion that they must be juveniles. They had that innocent look that young birds have, and were playing with their food – moving corn around and then tussling over a curl of crepe myrtle bark. They were quite beautiful. The skin on their faces and heads was like soft black leather, and their glossy black feathers from the neck down to the wings were arranged in a pattern, regular and pointed, like the scales on a reptile. I was really impressed by their appearance. What I found most adorable though, was their “hair”. They had wispy little feathers sticking up all over the top of their otherwise bare heads and one of them had bleached tips...really, it was rocking a kind of punky look, bleached tips and a black outfit – very cool! I felt very fortunate to get to see them up close this way – just being vultures. At the Bird Window.

I hope you get to see a world of interesting things when you make your way to Birdsong. We'll be closing for a few weeks the end of August, but will be looking forward to seeing everyone in September. Meanwhile, maybe we'll all get a little much-needed rain.

- KDB



**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:**

***Our Very Special Program Leaders:***

Dave McElveen, for leading the North American Bluebird Association’s Hairstreak Chapter Butterfly Walk. Please see page 5 for a list of the butterflies they observed.

Marvin Collins, for leading the *Summer Birding Tour*, see page 4 for the list of birds heard or seen.

Sandra Sallee, for leading another enjoyable *Take A Child Outside* program, with support from Carolyn Cohen.

***Special Financial Gifts:***

A heartfelt thank you to Lib and Fred Menger

***Memorial Gifts:***

Julia Neel, for a gift in memory of Betty Jinright

Betty Esco, for a gift in memory of Leon Neel.

Juanita Whiddon, for a gift in memory of Betty Jinright

Corrections to the last newsletter: Thank you to Dana Bryan and Gwendolyn Waldorf for their gift in memory of Betty Jinright and thank you to Donna Legare and Jody Walthall for their gift in memory of Leon Neel.

***Special Thanks To:***

Deborah “Kathy” McDaris, for her much-appreciated gift of 100 plastic signs that we can use for the Plant Sale next year! June is ecstatic about this gift – Kathy has saved us a huge amount of money we would have had to spend on new signage!

Thank you, Kathy!

Scott Ball, for the metal frames for some of these signs...!

Don and Hazel Dixon, for he new collection of hand-built Bluebird boxes Don and his son made for the gift shop – they are beautiful!

Our volunteer construction team, for their ongoing work on Chuck’s House this summer. Our volunteers are doing a lot of interesting and extensive work at the house, and we thank them all: Glen Berman, Buddy Holshouser, Mike Duggar, Steve Kunst and Mike Brezin.

Winnie and Wolf Adolph, for managing the Birdsong Gift Shop and having it stocked with interesting and beautiful items that we all enjoy. Thank you for making the suet cakes and taking good care of the birds and the Bird Window!

Bob Dunn and Wolf Adolph, for ID and photographic documentation of birds at the Bird Window; thank you Bob, for the amazing portraits of the female coyote.

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

Carolyn Cohen , for the pair of binoculars to loan when visitors need a pair.

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.

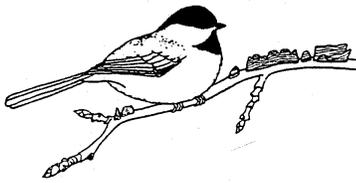
Tami Tomasello, for being our social media coordinator and managing our Twitter site so expertly.

Butterfly Garden volunteers Donna Legare, Bob Bearss, Beth Grant, Ann Morrow, Mary Janik, and Jan Blue. Thanks to all for the keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful!

Bluebird Monitors: Myles Black, Bob Bearss, and David Jones, for regular monitoring and data collection in spite of this hot, dry weather!

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Birdsong Nature Center<br/>Board of Directors<br/>2018 - 2019</b> |                |
| <b>President</b>   | Joe Peresich   |
| <b>Treasurer</b>   | Bill Preston   |
| <b>Directors</b>   |                |
| Jim Antista  | Margaret Tyson |
| Woody Search   | Michael Brezin |
| Ellery Sedgwick  | Scott Ball     |

|  |
|--|
| <b>BIRDSONG’S CORPORATE SPONSORS</b>   |
| Hopping, Green & Sams, PA              |
| Monrovia Growers of Georgia            |
| Native Nurseries                       |
| Trillium Gardens                       |
| Carroll and Company, CPA               |
| Import Authority                       |
| South GA Low Cost Spay & Neuter Clinic |
| Seminole Alterations                   |
| Corporation Service Company            |
| Chelsea Salon & Spa                    |
| TNB Financial Services                 |



# 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, stars, etc.) | _____                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Management          |  | _____                                |

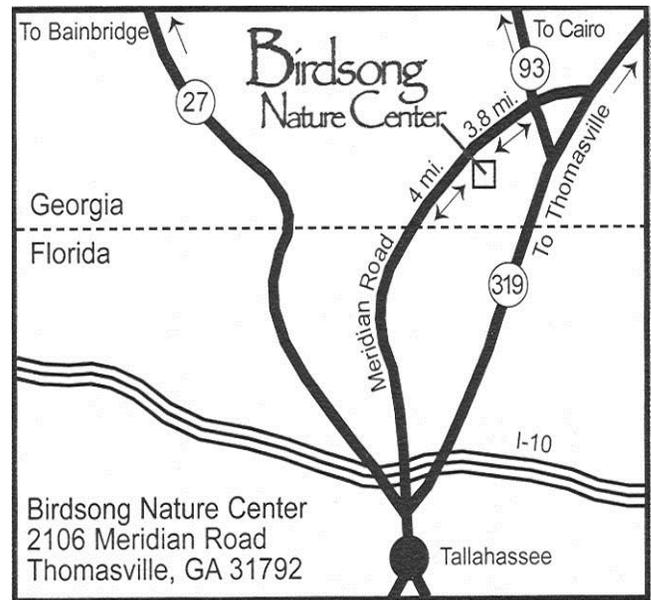
Memberships are renewable one year after the sign-up date. Members can upgrade to a higher category membership by sending the balance within the year. Memberships are deductible in part, depending on the value of goods and services received. Please call for information. Receipts stating the value provided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

# NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG

**Tallahassee**  
Sally Feehrer

**Thomasville**  
Casie Green

**Other**  
Rad Cook                      Brunswick, 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 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