

Birdsong Nature Center

November - December 2019

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November

Thurs.	Nov.7	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	Nov.9	Quail Covey Call Count and Census
Sat.	Nov. 16	Member Information Meeting For Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program and Conservation Easement
Tues.	Nov. 26	Quail Covey Call Count and Census
Sat.	Nov. 30	Thanksgiving Saturday Super Walk



December

Thurs.	Dec. 5	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	Dec. 7	Take a Child Outside For the Holidays!
Sat.	Dec. 14	Winter Solstice Celebration and Annual Meeting of the Members
Fri.	Dec. 20	Birdsong will be closed December 20 to January 3.

January

Fri.	Jan. 3	Center Reopens
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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, Birdsong Office
Fax line (229)-377-8723, or birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org

Dear Friends,

In this newsletter you will find an important article by our Executive Director, Kathleen Brady, regarding our work towards placing the Nature Center's property under a conservation easement. Presently, 121 of Birdsong's 565 acres of property are protected by a conservation easement held by the Georgia Wildlife Federation (GWF). Some of you may recall that Birdsong was awarded a significant grant in 2008 for having placed these 121 acres of Birdsong into a conservation easement, thereby protecting those acres of Birdsong's property in perpetuity.

An exceptional opportunity arose this past year in Georgia with the passage of an overwhelmingly (83%) voter-supported constitutional amendment designed to encourage conservation and preservation of Georgia's natural areas, water quality, and outdoor recreational properties. The passage of the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Amendment, Amendment 1, now provides a dedicated funding source for land and water conservation, as noted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The amendment stipulates that between 40% and 80% of sales tax collected on outdoor recreation equipment will go into the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund. Birdsong is working in partnership with Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy towards applying for a grant from the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program with the goal of placing the remaining 444 acres of Birdsong under a conservation easement with Tall Timbers. Please take a few minutes to read Kathleen's article containing information about this significant opportunity for Birdsong.

Soon you will be receiving information about Birdsong's 2019 Annual Appeal, and we hope you can help! The Annual Appeal is the major fund-raising priority for the Center as it provides the greatest part of our operating funds from year to year. Utilities, property taxes, insurance, equipment and structures maintenance, staff salaries, office systems, communications, and supply expenses – all of the costs that go into maintaining 565 acres of land and operating this non-profit organization for the purpose of completing our mission are absorbed from the funds generously donated to the Center. We literally could not exist but for the good intentions and generosity of our dedicated donors, members, and volunteers. All of us at Birdsong thank you very much for your kind support, and for your consideration in making an important, greatly valued donation to the Center during our 2019 Annual Appeal.

Best wishes from Birdsong for a very happy and healthy 2020! Please visit soon and, as always, let us know of interesting things you encounter along the trails.

Sincerely,
Joe Peresich
President, Board of Directors



**Put on your calendar!
Old-Timey Plant Sale
3rd Saturday in March
March 21, 2020**

PROPAGATING WILD AZALEAS By seed, root sprouts, and stem cuttings

Wild azaleas comprise a family of at least ten *Rhododendron* species that are naturally-occurring in the southeastern US. They exist in a multitude of colors from white to red. In addition, different species bloom from early spring to September! Only three are truly native to our region. At the Birdsong Nature Center only *Rhododendron canescans* (pink and white) is naturally occurring. Over the years one other has been introduced, *R. austrinum* (gold and orange). One other species not native to our area has been also introduced to Birdsong, *R. flammeum* (red to orange). These three species are located in the Butterfly Garden and along the lower woodland trail south of the house, in an area called the Azalea Garden. They certainly brighten the landscape wherever they occur. But have you ever wondered how they reproduce? Well, primarily three ways. By seed, root sprouts and stem cuttings.

Seeds Native azaleas develop seed capsules which mature in fall. Each capsule produces 25-100 seeds that are dispersed by wind and fall to the ground. A lucky few fall on mineral soil or moss and may germinate under ideal moisture and temperature conditions. In nature, germination and successful growth to a mature plant is a rare event.

Root Sprouts Nature has given wild azaleas the ability to sprout new stems from underground roots. In the wild, this occurs when a mature plant is injured by a falling tree, branch, or more frequently by fire! Wild azaleas are well adapted to natural fires. Fire will kill the mature azalea stems and if intense enough, much of any surrounding overstory trees...letting in abundant light on which azaleas thrive. The root sprouts grow rapidly in the abundant light for 10-30 years, produce seed and eventually become suppressed by the encroaching tree cover and then get released again by another natural fire, starting

Stem Cuttings Man has learned that stems taken from many plants can be coaxed to produce new roots and subsequently a new independent plant. Such is the case for some wild azaleas. This allows us to exactly reproduce specific desirable flower colors and other attributes.

At the Birdsong Plant Sale held in mid-March, we offer hundreds of wild azaleas produced from seed and others from cuttings. Most of these were grown by the renowned nurseryman, Ernest Koone III, from Pine Mountain near Callaway Gardens in Georgia. We hope you will take time this winter to survey your yards for good wild azalea locations and bring some home on March. 21, 2020.

- Dan Miller

QUAIL COVEY CALL COUNT AND CENSUS

A citizen science fundraiser for Birdsong

Saturday, November 9 5:45am

Tuesday, November 26 6:00am

The Northern Bobwhite, a small, unassuming bird with a close-knit social system, is an iconic figure in the southeast, well-known as an important game bird. Its small size belies its ecological significance, which is enormous and historic – the Bobwhite Quail was the key species that led scientists in the 1930's and beyond to understand the necessity for frequent fire in fire-adapted ecosystems. Much of that early research took place right here in our immediate area, is now ongoing, and continues to have a powerful influence on now-accepted best land management practices. Mr. Herbert Stoddard, known as the father of fire ecology, lived on Sherwood Plantation adjacent to Birdsong and led the scientific inquiries relating fire and quail; Ed Komarek, Birdsong's co-founder, worked for him. Tall Timbers Research Station, just over the Florida line, was born out of the strong interest of local scientists and plantation owners to learn how to manage large properties with fire to encourage healthy populations of quail, a beloved game bird.

Throughout the summer months, the distinctive "bobwhite" call can be heard across Birdsong, especially throughout our open fields and woods. These past summer mornings quail were calling frequently around the House Pasture and Gin House Field. We have never formally undertaken a census of how many coveys exist on Birdsong, but we'd love to know the status of our quail population, so we are undertaking an experimental covey count.

Of obvious value to quail hunters, a covey call count can help a landowner learn how many coveys inhabit their land and where these may be found. The same techniques developed by hunters and scientists can be used to help give us a greater understanding of the bobwhite population at Birdsong. Lane Green, retired Executive Director of Tall Timbers, has offered to lead two covey counts this fall and you are invited to participate.

We will meet at the parking area well before first light, immediately get our group out in the woods to a previously scouted site, get settled quietly before the birds wake up, and then remain completely silent and wait. When it begins to get light on the eastern horizon, the quail greet the day and each other with their signature call. We will remain silently in place while we listen and pinpoint exactly where the birds are and how many are calling. When the closest covey is located, Lane will flush them and we will count the number of birds that fly. We'll then return to the Bird Window for coffee and a light snack and Lane will tell us more about the Northern Bobwhite and answer your questions.

If you would like to share this unusual experience, help contribute to a citizen science fundraiser, and don't mind getting up in the middle of the night, we invite you to join us!

RESERVATIONS AND PAYMENT REQUIRED IN ADVANCE; limited spaces available. Please call or email by Wednesday, November 6th (for November 9th) or Friday, November 22nd (for November 26th) to reserve your space. When you make your reservation, we will give you more information about what to bring and will stay in touch with you up to the day prior in case of any rain delays or meeting time adjustments. Please note – *be punctual*. We have to be in place a good half-hour before first light, so we have to leave the parking area promptly.

TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE

For The Holidays!
Saturday, December 7
9:30-Noon

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

\$5 Friends, \$8 nonmembers, children half-price. Make **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE** by noon on Friday, December 13, so we know what materials to provide. Call (229)377-4408 or email birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org.



THANKSGIVING SATURDAY SUPER WALK

Saturday, November 30
9:00AM – Noon

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

“Too much turkey? Got cabin fever? Want your visitors to experience the Red Hills of North Florida/South Georgia? We will leisurely explore several miles of Birdsong's less-traveled trails. Spring Pond, Frog Pond, Big Bay Pond, Big Bay Swamp, Upper Pond and Farm Pond will be waypoints as we experience Birdsong's rich and varied habitats with all they have to offer. Our path will be the loop that maximizes the enclosed area.” Beth Grant has led this walk now for a number of years and has made it her own. You will enjoy her observations and interesting additions to the route!

\$5 Friends, \$8 nonmembers, children half-price.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORK DAY

Thursdays, November 7 and December 5
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.

Red Hills Natural History Alliance's WINTER ORNITHOLOGY FIELD COURSE

Co-sponsored by Birdsong Nature Center and Tall
Timbers Research Station

The second Red Hills Natural History Alliance field course was attended by 16 individuals from Tallahassee, Thomasville, Crawfordville and Donalsonville. It was led by Dr. Richard Carter, of Valdosta State University, with teaching support from Wilson Baker and Todd Engstrom. Dr. Carter is an excellent teacher and a wealth of information about grasses and other plants. Our group enjoyed a lot of field time identifying an abundance of fall flora then in the early stages of blooming, as well as the grasses and sedges beloved by Dr. Carter. We botanized the trails on the slope to the lake and by Gannet Pond at Tall Timbers, and visited a tract of longleaf pine on Pebble Hill. On Sunday the group walked the trails and Farm Pond at Birdsong and visited the Bird Window. In the evenings and at lunchtime, the group learned the technical aspects of grasses ID using dissecting scopes. Thanks to our expert leaders we also learned about the ecological importance of the many species we found and their relationships to frequent fire.

This was an enthusiastic group of folks; they were a lot of fun to work with and we thank them for their interest and persistence on a sunny, hot weekend! Thank you to Todd Engstrom and Brian Weibler of Tall Timbers for their many roles in making this two-day field intensive a success. We look forward to our ongoing partnership with Tall Timbers and to collaborating on future courses offered by the Red Hills Natural History Alliance – we will keep you posted.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS
Saturday, December 14 4:50pm

All members of Birdsong Nature Center are invited to attend an Annual Meeting of the Members at the start of this year's Winter Solstice Celebration. This brief meeting will include an introduction of Board members and the annual election. We invite you to stay and enjoy the Solstice Celebration.

The main item on the Annual Meeting agenda is the election of the Board of Directors for 2019-2020. On the slate are nominees Margaret Tyson of Cairo, Georgia, and Scott Ball of Tallahassee, Florida. Current members serving are President Joe Peresich, Treasurer Bill Preston, Woody Search, Jim Antista, Mike Brezin, and Ellery Sedgwick. We offer our sincere appreciation for their dedication and commitment to Birdsong.

We invite you to meet your Board of Directors and fellow Birdsong members, vote at the corporate meeting, and stay for the Winter Solstice Celebration. We'll look forward to seeing you there!



WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION
Saturday, December 14, 2019

Please note special new experience and performance after the bonfire
\$8 adults, \$5 children

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

4:50pm Annual Meeting of the Members

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

5:45pm Welcome and lighting of the bonfire, accompanied by Bradley White and friends on their didgeridoos. Once the bonfire is going strong, we will "throw the bamboo". Each person will be given a bamboo stick to throw in the fire where it will explode and create good intentions for the coming year.

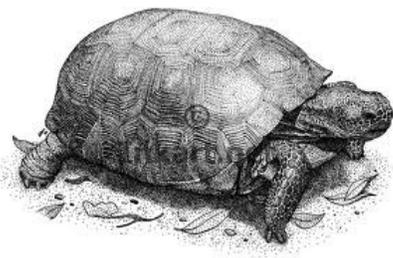
Around 6:30 Together we will walk along the path to the Star Pasture. Along the way, enjoy the beautiful handmade lanterns illuminating our path and carried by participants. Josephine A. Garibaldi and Paul Zmolek crafted these lanterns in celebration and in honor of the flora and fauna of Birdsong. After arrival at the Star Pasture, we will enjoy a performance by Garibaldi and Zmolek's Callous Physical Theatre followed by a guided observation of the night sky. Dress for the weather, bring a blanket to lie on to observe the stars, and bring your binoculars or scope for viewing and a flashlight.

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

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

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

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



Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program Grant and Conservation Easement on Birdsong

Information meeting for members on Saturday, November 16th, 10 – 11am.

The state of Georgia recently passed the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship amendment to provide a dedicated funding mechanism to support parks and trails and protect and acquire lands critical to wildlife, clean water and outdoor recreation across the state of Georgia. The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) is now accepting grant applications for its first grant cycle.

In 2008, Birdsong placed 121 acres, our west wing, under easement with the Georgia Wildlife Foundation as the easement holder. This project was supported by a grant from the Conservation Fund. Since then, it has always been the Birdsong Board of Directors' intent to place the rest of Birdsong's acreage under easement for long-term protection and to also find a way to fund this placement.

Birdsong Nature Center is entering into a partnership with Tall Timbers to apply for a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant for funding to enable Tall Timbers to purchase a conservation easement on the remaining 444 acres currently unencumbered. Tall Timbers will be the grant applicant and Birdsong will partner in this effort. This grant, if awarded, would enable Birdsong to protect its total acreage in perpetuity and provide funding to do so. The GOSP grant pre-application will be submitted on October 31st and we will learn in early February 2020 if the grant has been awarded or not. If awarded, we proceed to the actual application and have two years to complete the project.

A conservation easement is a legal and binding agreement whereby a landowner (Birdsong Nature Center) agrees to give up one of its multiple property rights in perpetuity. The property right to be given up is that of commercial and residential development: the right to build a housing subdivision or strip mall, associated roads, and so forth. The purpose of giving up this right is to ensure the biological, natural, and historical integrity of the property over time.

The landowner enters into this agreement with an outside party: a "qualified organization" which is in a position to hold the easement legally and to monitor the property to confirm that agreements within the legal document are being adhered to, i.e., no development is taking place. Tall Timbers has been selected as the easement holder because it is a qualified and accredited organization under the law, it is strongly committed to land conservation and appropriate land management, it has a history of holding easements locally and holds the majority (136,000 acres) of easement acreage in our south Georgia/north Florida region. It is an entity we know and are familiar with, we have been working together on a variety of projects in the last few years, and it is geographically close by. Tall Timbers is very interested in protecting as much acreage along the Meridian Road/Ochlockonee River Corridor as possible, so Birdsong and Tall Timbers are a good match for developing a conservation easement agreement and as partners in applying for GOSP grant funding.

We will be holding a member meeting on Saturday, November 16th, to provide more information and to answer any questions you may have about this process. Meanwhile feel free to email me at kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter.org with any comments or questions.

-KDB

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

October 9, 2019

Weather We need rain. It has been several years since we experienced a drought of this nature. Our last major rain event was on August 28th with 3.38 inches; since then there have been only two rain events in September with a total of .47 inches, and one in October with .15 inches. The forecast is dismal and the heat is unrelenting. It shows: we are having to water some of the wild azaleas around the house and office, and Alan and Lynette keep running the sprinkler in the Butterfly Garden. Fortunately, Lynette and I happened to notice the old wild azalea near the restroom – it was the first azalea and the first plant planted in the original south wing of the Butterfly Garden. I think we caught it in time. The grass of the lawns and trails are so dry they are crunchy to walk on and normally hardy plants like beautyberry are badly wilted. Many trees and shrubs are turning yellow, and lots of hardwoods are losing their leaves already. We are disappointed because this likely means that we won't get to see much fall color in the woods this year. We are also concerned because the fall flowering plants are starting to put on a great show – they just need some rain. Yes, we have drought depression around here.

Land Management Alan has been doing some selective mowing in areas we burned to knock down the tall dead stems and open up what had been brushy understory. In several places where he has done this the grasses and herbaceous groundcover plants are surging back. You can see this well on the south edge of the Wildlife Woods. It is full of elephant's foot and a nice variety of other blooming plants. We are seeing a lot of diversity in those areas that got opened up by the hot burning this past season.

Alan also mowed the blooming and fruiting flowering heads of expanses of winged sumac out in the Gin House Field. We are hoping that this treatment will contain their spread.

Wildflowers In spite of this severe drought there is a major wildflower bloom occurring at Birdsong. It has taken about two weeks to really pick up, but now the bloom is on. In recent recent years goldenrods have dominated the landscape, but this year we are seeing an abundance of *Agalinis* and *Liatris*, two of our favorite fall wildflowers. We have not seen this much *Agalinis* in many years; the west block of the House Pasture directly behind the Barn is full of tall waving stems loaded with pink flowers mixed in with several different species of Goldenrod, *Pittypopsis*, and Narrow-leaved Sunflower. This mix of pink and gold can be seen all across Birdsong – we recommend you take the main loop trail around Birdsong. It will lead you through a variety of habitat where you can walk among these tall beautiful fall flowers, both sides of the trail, up close and face to face!

We are also enjoying a first-in-years showing of Blazing Star or *Liatris*. It is all over the property, tall curving wands of small purple flowers, occurring in patches. If you walk past Chuck's house toward the east, right at the top of the slope there is a beautiful big patch of *Liatris* on the south side of the trail...well worth a look!

There are of course many other wonderful blooming plants right now: the purple, blue and pink contingent includes Mistflower, Blue Curls, *Lobelia*, late Butterfly Pea, and a variety of beggar's tick or beggarweed. Yellow and gold is the dominant color in many places and we are enjoying the sun-bright showing of asters, legumes, and others.

This is also a wonderful time of year to see grasses, and the fields and woods are full of emerging flowering seed heads. The Gin House is full of several species of broomsedge, or *Andropogon*, and the woods are full of tall feathery plume grass. The grasses just get better and more impressive as the fall progresses – the ripening seed heads range from bronze to gold and almost glow when backlit. Watch for them on your next walk, they are impressive.

We were very fortunate to enjoy a Botany Walk with Guy Anglin last Saturday. He is a very knowledgeable botanist and ecologist and he identified almost everything we saw that was flowering. Guy not only can identify these many plants, he can also place the entire scene into ecological perspective and help explain why these specific plants are found in their particular location. Birdsong, being overall an oldfield habitat in the slow process of being restored to a more natural state is an interesting mix of plants, most of which are present due to the years of soil disturbance from cultivation and cattle ranching. We continue to do what we can with our management to enhance the restoration process.

Sightings There are a lot of bobwhite quail around! In the last two weeks we have had several reports of visitors flushing coveys. On a recent walk, on the trail by the planted longleaf, I could see the small outline of a quail far away at the edge of the trail. As I approached this solitary quail turned and stepped into the tall grass. When I got within about 20 feet I could hear a lot of soft quail talk, whispers, discussing what to do...I kept walking, hearing this conversation among many invisible birds, and when I arrived about three feet from where the quail had been, they exploded out of the dog fennel – I have never heard such a loud sound as that sentry bird made as he or she rose. It happened fast – I was trying to get a sense of numbers, but had no time to count – roughly 10 birds of different sizes, mostly smaller than an adult, burst up into the air and off in all directions, then down in the weeds. Two of them were left struggling to extricate themselves from the tall dog fennel and finally made it out. There must have been at least twelve, maybe more birds. It was fascinating to hear the build-up, the discussion, just before they lifted off...Of course it startled me, my heart was pounding – what a great escape strategy. It stops you in

your tracks! I wonder what parameters that lead bird needs to make the final decision to bolt. I wonder if he or she has to keep telling the rest of them to wait, hold on, yes, I know they are nearly here, yes, it is terrifying, but you have to wait for this to work and only go on my signal.....*now!*

In the last 10 days we've also flushed another mixed age group covey, and both times they were within 100 feet of the intersection at the south edge of the Gin House leading to the Listening Place. It is always a thrill to experience that unexpected eruption of birds out of the grasses... We're delighted to see them and invite you to join us for the upcoming covey count fundraisers with Lane Green – please see page 6 for details.

We are also seeing quite a few turkeys recently, which is always a treat. My last sighting was at Linton's Corner; I was approaching from the Live Oak Hammock and saw four big birds leisurely poking around - they saw me immediately and proceeded to lope off, heads down, and disappeared among the trees. I caught a glimpse of some deep red wattles as they left. I keep finding turkey feathers on the trails too, and it always feels like I've been given an important gift.

There have been two highly unexpected sightings within the last month. Alan was working in the Holly Woods and happened to spot a large diamondback rattler coiled up resting in the leafy understory of the Holly Woods, near the edge of the Upper Pond. He seemed very relaxed and was not perturbed by Alan's presence. He did eventually move along toward the water and was about 5 feet long. I saw a much smaller one on the south firelane about two weeks ago, this one too was well camouflaged and I didn't see it till I was pretty close. It also stayed still, never moved, and I walked on. I am always impressed on these rare occasions by the velvety quality of a rattlesnake's scales. We are actually pleased to know there are diamondbacks out here. We've been concerned about this important snake's absence – they used to be an abundant species in our area, but no longer. For years we have seen them only rarely, once every three years or so, and usually out in the deep woods, nowhere near the trails, like both of these sightings. They are an integral part of the ecosystem and food web, so we are happy to know they are here.

Bird Window With this hot, dry weather the birds are taking full advantage of the mister and pool – the Bird Window is a very popular place these days. Since we got back from the August break the usual cast of characters shows up every day; the Blue Jays, Brown Thrashers, Carolina Wrens, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Carolina Chickadees, American Crows, Towhees, and Cardinals. We had a great cardinal season and most days there will be around a dozen birds present, adults and young, happily eating seed, corn and suet. The pool is often occupied by enthusiastic birds, bathing wildly; the resident frog just dodges any new arrivals.

We've been seeing a number of fall migrants – my

favorite is the American Redstart. The one I saw last week was jet black with beautiful salmon-colored patches on the wings and tail; he was fluttering around in the mist. We've also had a brilliantly colored Hooded Warbler stop by as well as two Grey Catbirds who stay busy chasing each other around. Other birds of note include: Summer Tanagers (male and female), Black-and-white Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Downy Woodpeckers (male and female), Pileated Woodpecker (they rarely come to the Bird Window any more), Swainson's Thrush, Northern Parula, Veery, Yellow-throated Vireo, a Red-shouldered Hawk two days in a row, White-breasted Nuthatches, Red-eyed Vireos, and Ground Doves. The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were last recorded on September 28th.

We are still being visited by two Black Vultures. I walked into the Window today and startled all three of us – one was up on the bamboo trough pressed against the window and one was sitting on the Betty Feeder bough. I've never seen them quite that close. They didn't get too excited, but flapped over to the blue birch above the mister and settled in for a preening session together. They strike me as the same birds I saw a few months ago, just a little more mature. The skin on their heads is no longer smooth and black, but they still have that innocent look. I find them charming – huge and charming, with very sweet faces. They have been here a lot and Bob Dunne got a great portrait of one of them. It is sitting on Mirhi's desk; you must have a look next time you are out. We are enjoying the birds while we can. Soon we'll enter that phase of the year when they go out to the woods and fields to enjoy all the berries and seeds of fall and there will be less activity at the Window for a month or two.

Along with the big bloom right now comes an abundance of pollinators! There are a huge variety of bees, wasps and butterflies all over these beautiful flowers! The fields and woods are lively with all this color and subtle activity. We expect this will lead to good fruiting and seeding for wildlife food and for next year's generation of plants.

We are doing our best to accept the fact of no rain and no prediction of rain and enjoy what we can in the world around us and try not to worry about it too much. The vegetation and wildlife are doing their best with what is. We take inspiration from the phenomenal wildflower bloom – even with the drought the wildflowers are giving their all, not holding back one bit. It is their time of year and they are going for it, all the way.

Eventually there will be cool mornings and rain will someday come; everything will change and then we'll have more small stories to tell you from Birdsong.

- KDB

BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:

Our Very Special Program Leaders:

Sandra Sallee, for leading another enjoyable *Take A Child Outside* program, with support from Carolyn Cohen.
Guy Anglin, for leading a wonderful Fall Botany Walk.
Marvin Collins, for leading the enjoyable Fall Birding Tour, where we watched more wildflowers than birds!
WILD Women Sharman Franklin, Laurie Jones, and Teresa Adkins and Gavin Franklin. Thank you, Sharman and Gavin for leading a field trip for the Thomasville Community Resource Center's fall break camp.

Special Financial Gifts:

Mark and Susan Baldino
Winnie and Wolf Adolph
Carol Klacik
John and Rebecca Sheet, in honor of Ellery and Elyse Sedgwick

Special Thanks To:

Scott Ball, for bringing us more plastic signs and metal frames for the Plant Sale.
Our volunteer construction team, for the ongoing work on Chuck's House. 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, 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 portrait of the bathing Towhee and the booklet of photos and portrait of our new Window friends, the two young Black Vultures.
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 star books and snakeskins!
Mary Janik, for the gift of gopher tortoise coloring/education books and pencils for our children's programs.
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, Lina Gwynn, and Jan Blue. Thanks to all for the keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful!
Birdsong's Board of Directors, for all its work on the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant and conservation easement.

**Birdsong Nature Center
Board of Directors
2018 - 2019**

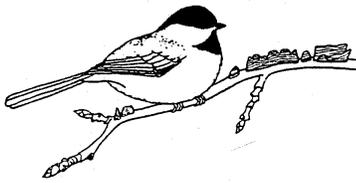
President Joe Peresich
Treasurer Bill Preston

Directors

Jim Antista Margaret Tyson
Woody Search Michael Brezin
Ellery Sedgwick Scott Ball

BIRDSONG'S CORPORATE SPONSORS

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.

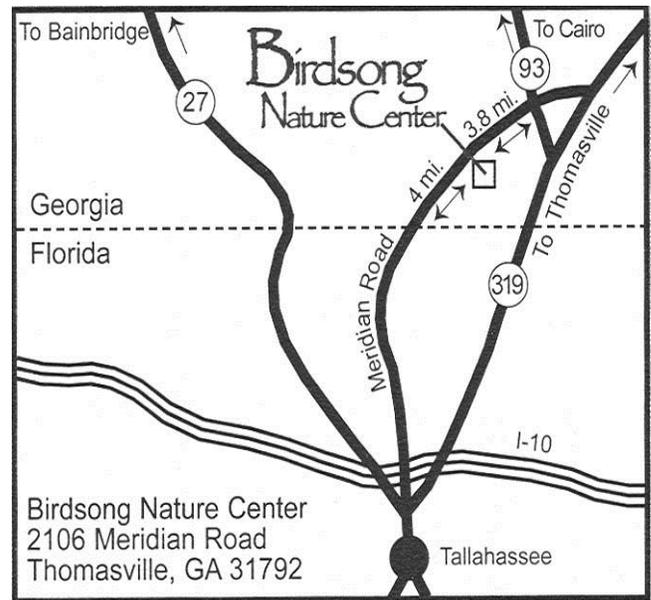


NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG

Tallahassee
Rhonda Saint
Joe Dawsey

Other
Perry Clementss

Bainbridge, 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