

# Birdsong Nature Center

May/June 2015

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### May

- Thur. May 7 Butterfly Garden Work Day
- Sat. May 9 Meet The Gopher Tortoise!
- Wed. May 13 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Sat. May 16 Bluebird Trail Monitoring  
A Chorus of Frogs: Evening Listening Walk
- Thur. May 21 Invasive Plant Removal Work Day
- Wed. May 27 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Sat. May 30 Bluebird Trail Monitoring  
Birdsong History: A Legacy of Two Families

### June

- Thur. June 4 Butterfly Garden Work Day
- Sat. June 6 Take A Child Outside and Get Wet and Muddy!
- Wed. June 10 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Sat. June 13 Bluebird Trail Monitoring  
Music to Our Ears: A Chorus of Frogs
- Thur. June 18 Invasive Plant Removal Work Day
- Sat. June 20 Summer Birding At Birdsong
- Wed. June 25 Bluebird Trail Monitoring
- Sat. June 27 Bluebird Trail Monitoring



### BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER

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

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

TWITTER: @BirdsongNatureC

FACEBOOK: Birdsong Nature Center

YOUTUBE: Birdsong Nature Center



### BIRD WINDOW AND TRAIL HOURS

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

### Bird Window and Nature Trails

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

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

### Registration

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

Dear Birdsong Members,

As we have reported in previous newsletters, over the last few months our Board of Directors has been considering an increase to Birdsong's membership dues. As many of you may already know, our dues have not changed since Birdsong's founding in 1986. Adjusting membership fees is one important part of a larger effort to help us support the long-term stability of the Nature Center.

The new membership dues that we decided on affect only the first three of our membership categories: Individual Friends increases from \$25/year to \$30/year, Family Friends from \$35/year to \$45/year, and Friends of the Cardinal from \$50/year to \$60/year. All other category amounts remain unchanged. These new membership fees will go into effect on July 1, 2015.

Before the effective date of the increase arrives we very much encourage all of our Individual, Family, and Cardinal members to renew and extend current memberships at today's rates. For example, if your membership expires on February 1, 2016, you can renew before July 1 at today's rates and have your membership extended to February 1, 2017. The membership expiration date is printed on the label of your newsletter.

Memberships can be renewed using the form included in this newsletter, or by using the "Memberships" page on our Website: [www.birdsongnaturecenter.org](http://www.birdsongnaturecenter.org). Please see the article on page 5 in this newsletter about renewing online.

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

We want very much to continue maintaining this unique, beautiful place for current and future generations alike, and for Birdsong to continue being a great value to its members. We very sincerely appreciate your support – as members, donors, and volunteers – in making Birdsong the irreplaceable asset to our community that it has become. The Nature Center wouldn't be here today for all to enjoy but for your keen interest in helping to preserve this special place, and in supporting Birdsong's educational mission. We sincerely thank each of you for being the greatly appreciated member and supporter that you are, and that we hope you will continue to be for many years into the future.

Very truly yours,  
Joe Peresich  
Board President



***"The Best Plant Sale I've Ever Been To"***

I overheard two plant sale shoppers during the 2015 Birdsong Old-Timey Plant Sale. They had filled their wagon with a rose bush and a nice selection of perennials and were heading to the cashier. "This is the best plant sale I've ever been to," the man said to his companion. I did not step up and introduce myself and explain that I had thought up the whole idea of Birdsong's Plant Sale eight years ago. I did not say "Thank you, I'm glad you enjoyed your day at Birdsong and I hope you'll come back next year." Instead I said, "I agree! So well organized!" "And a great selection of plants," she said. "The workers are so friendly and helpful," he said. I stood there for a while in the tally line egging them on and collecting all their compliments in my head to convey to our invaluable plant sale workers. They loved the signs -- thank you Janeen for all those long hours photographing, writing, and printing; they admired the layout of the sale -- thank you Mike for the showy tall plant station stanchions; they were impressed by the variety and vigor of the plants -- thank you fellow gardeners and plant donors.

I worry that as the plant sale becomes old and established, many of the workers and volunteers will grow complacent and drop out, giving their time and enthusiasm to new endeavors. But even now in the eighth year the stalwart old crew still shows up and works hard. I worry that after eight years of digging up and giving plants to Birdsong the most reliable plant donors will begin to see their gardens depleted. But every year we find new gardeners who join our team and are happy to share their plants. I want to thank all the volunteers who give so much to Birdsong's plant sale -- your creative ideas, your cheerful enthusiasm, your hard work, and your extensive knowledge of plants are what make ours the best plant sale I've ever been to.

- June White  
Plant Sale Chair

In a short article it is not possible to adequately thank the many people who volunteered their time toward a big event such as the Plant Sale. 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. Please know that your contribution mattered - it was a great Plant Sale. Special thanks go to June Bailey White, Plant Sale Chair, for her leadership and year-round commitment; and the Old-Timey Plant Sale Committee: Betty Jinright, Eleanor Dietrich, Janeen Langley, Kathleen Reid Scott and Harriet Hawkins. 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	Ute Schorn	Bonnie Spann	Dan Miller
Mike Miller	Russ Frydenborg	Charles Spann	Beth Grant
Kristine Dougherty	Robin Frydenborg	Lucy Brown	Steve McGatha
Barbara White	Stanton Beazley	Larry Brown	Chuck Eason
Ben White	Bob Bearss	Susan	Lane Green
Lisa Reeves	Janeen Langley	Ellery Sedgwick	Chris Alexander
Pamala Anderson	Winfred Langley	Elyse Barksdale	Vanessa Crisler
Bill Anderson	Joe Chesnut	Albert Harrison	Mirhi Childs
Michael Herndon	Margie McInnes	Angie Cauley	Kandy Pugh
Kay Morris	Mario Taylor	Twitty Titus	Mo Monsalvatge
Dee Morris	Carolyn Hax	Carole Hayes	Monty Monsalvatge
Nancy Keller	Reid May	Julia Sawyer	Donna Legare
Gunilla Trull	Lynn Friedman	Don Dixon	Alan Parker
Ken Misner	Jeff Friedman	Hazel Dixon	Grayal Farr
Jane White	Byron Rhodes	Russ Barrett	Geary Langford
Barbara White	Woody Search	Becky McNeill	Bruce Ritchie
Berry Penhallegon	Joe Newborn	Keith McNeill	Sue Ellen Smith
Clayton Penhallegon	Jim Antista	Linda Heffron	Alexis Bussey
Joe Peresich	Marsha Antista	Lynette Hitt	Kendejah Cummings
Debbie Edgil	Bill Preston	Alan Strowd	Jackson Blay
Kerry Edgil	Dale Aldridge	Fran Rutkovsky	Jacob Bruhn
Elizabeth Riley	Grayal Farr	Betty Esco	Angie McInnes
Fred Dietrich	Fran Puryear	Leeann Orr	Annie McInnes
Mary Katherine Faircloth	Charles Puryear	Hannah Orr	

We offer our special thanks to: Mike Duggar, for re-constructing and reorganizing all our signage; Mike Miller, for support beyond the call of duty; Lagran Saunders and Ben Baldwin, for the superb catering, with support from Mac Saunders and Rayanne Mitchell; Ben Baldwin, for the magnificent table display; our generous plant donors Stewart Chandler of Monrovia and Richard May of May Nursery for the beautiful plants; and Dan Miller, for his plants and special participation. Thank you, Galbaby Scott, for organizing and coordinating the Preview Party. We loved the Biscuit Boys: John Lovett, Andy Moorer and Bryan Murray – our Preview Party musicians! Thank you, Birdsong Volunteer Coordinator Margie McInnes; and station leaders Don and Hazel Dixon, for the food service and donation of supplies; Margie McInnes and Lynette Hitt, for the gift shop; Carole Hayes, Sandra Sallee and Julia Sawyer, for greeting; Chuck Eason, for parking; Betty Ashler and Brenda Coy, for membership. Thank you, Janeen and Wink Langley for the herbs. Thank you, Darrell Mudra and Randy Wind for the special article published in the Cairo Messenger, and June White and Janeen Langley for their published articles. Thanks, Vital Signs, for donating banner lettering; Charles Puryear for the gift of handmade bluebird boxes; Fran Santagata, for help with tea; Ken Barnhard, for the traffic cones; and Leeann Orr for the beautiful woven basket. A special thank you also goes to Officer Raymond “Butch” Adams and Officer Grover Griffin Jr., of the Grady County Sheriff’s Department, for assisting us with traffic control on our single lane driveway.

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

**Hopping, Green & Sams, P.A.   Monrovia Growers of Georgia   May Nursery**

**Marta and Jerry Turner   Thomasville Nursery**

## MEET THE GOPHER TORTOISE!

Saturday, May 9  
9AM to Noon

Join Alex Kalfin, biologist and Gopher Tortoise Local Government Coordinator with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, for a kids- and family-oriented program about the life and ecology of the gopher tortoise. Alex will teach us about this important species' life history, reproduction, foraging, burrows, conservation and more. Alex will bring a "treasure chest" of interesting touchable artifacts including tortoise and commensal species' skins and shells, etc.. Alex will also bring a live gopher tortoise named Scooter, so you can see a real gopher up close. We will then ride out to Birdsong's gopher tortoise neighborhood to show you what the burrows look like (we won't have a burrow scope this time) and show you some of the habitat improvements we are working on.

**RESERVATIONS. PLEASE.** There is no charge for the program, but please call or email by noon on Friday, May 8 to reserve your space. Class size limit: 15 people.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is providing its resources for this program as a public service free of charge to the host and attendees. We thank the FWC for providing this educational opportunity.

## BIRDSONG HISTORY: A Legacy of Two Families...The Dickey and the Komareks

Saturday, May 30  
9:30AM – Noon

Birdsong Nature Center has had a long and rich history, featuring many interesting people and a legacy of excellent land use and care. Over the last three years, Betty Ashler, with assistance from Galbady Scott, has examined and sorted the archival collections of documents and photos saved by Betty and Ed Komarek, Birdsong's founders. Betty discovered many fascinating personal letters and other family writings going back to the Dickey family era, put together a detailed family tree, and made connections with many living Dickey relatives as well as doing research at numerous historical societies and facilities in the state of Georgia. She has created an excellent power point presentation about Birdsong's history from the Dickey Plantation era through the Komarek era. We hope you will join us at Birdsong for this presentation. We will also offer a tour of the house and a trip out to the Gin House Field to observe the historic terracing. If you are interested in local history, or interested in Birdsong, you will find this an intriguing and enlightening presentation.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Class space is limited to fifteen people. Please call or email by Friday, May 29 at noon to reserve your space.

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

## A CHORUS OF FROGS EVENING LISTENING WALK

Saturday, May 16  
8:00 – 10:00PM

Join Nancy Ann Thomas for an evening field experience to practice your listening skills and learn to identify our woods and aquatic frogs by their calls. We will walk out to the Farm Pond, Big Bay Swamp, Big Bay Pond and the Frog Pond to hear the early evening chorus. We welcome anyone interested in frogs, especially those who attended Nancy's first frog program in March. It was a cool night, and the frogs were somewhat subdued. Ever since, we have been hearing loud and exuberant calling from Big Bay Swamp all the way up to the house, so we want to invite you back to enjoy a louder chorus with us.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** This program is geared for adults and mature children. Please call the office or email by 4pm Friday May 15<sup>th</sup> to reserve a space. \$4 Friends, \$8 non-members.



## MUSIC TO OUR EARS: A CHORUS OF FROGS

Saturday, June 13  
6:30 – 9 PM

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

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** This program is geared for adults and mature children. Please call the office or email by 4pm Friday, June 12 to reserve a space. We have a class limit of 12.

\$4 Friends, \$8 non-members.

## ONLINE MEMBERSHIP PURCHASES AND DONATIONS

We are happy to announce that Birdsong can now accept membership purchases, renewals, and donations to the Center, online via our Web-site, [www.birdsongnaturecenter.org](http://www.birdsongnaturecenter.org). To use the online service, please see the “Memberships” and “Donations” links shown on all of our web pages. Credit and debit card purchases and donations can be made, with PayPal providing card processing services. You do not need a PayPal account to use the service. Note that for membership purchases and renewals, the mailing address can be different from the card billing address. Both membership purchase and donation processes allow for special instructions or notes to be entered for Birdsong. We hope that you will find the online service convenient and easy to use. Please let us know if you experience any problem or have questions about the service.

### TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE AND GET WET AND MUDDY!

**Saturday, June 6  
9:30AM - Noon**

Celebrate summer at Birdsong with your favorite child or children. Leader Sandra Sallee and Executive Director Kathleen Brady will take you to discover the underwater inhabitants of the Farm Pond and Upper Pond. We'll observe the many fascinating adaptations that plants and animals have for living in an aquatic environment.

Please bring a clean dishpan or bucket that has had no chemicals or soap in it, a dip net if you have one, boots, waders or old tennis shoes for wading in, a change of clothes for the ride home, and sun protection. Bring lunch if you want to stay and picnic afterward. Enjoy learning something new and have a special experience with your child in the great, wet outdoors.

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE**, so we know how many to prepare for. Please sign up by noon, Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.

\$3 Friends, \$5 nonmembers, children half-price. Includes a handout and resource list for year-round outdoor activities with children.

### INVASIVES REMOVAL WORK DAYS

**Thursdays, 9:30 to 11:30AM  
May 21 and June 18**

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

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

### SUMMER BIRDING AT BIRDSONG

**Saturday, June 20  
8AM to 11 or so**

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

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE.** Call or email to let us know you are coming by 4PM Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.

\$4 Friends, \$8 non-members.



### BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORK DAYS

**Thursdays, May 7 and June 4  
9:30AM to Noon**

Please join our Butterfly Garden volunteers on the first Thursday of the month to tend our beautiful Butterfly Garden! 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.

### BLUEBIRD TRAIL MONITORING

**April 29; May 13, 16, 27, 30; June 10, 13, 25, 27  
8:30AM (summer starting time)**

Our Bluebird Trail team checks nest boxes every other Saturday. Join these veteran Bluebird volunteers for a fascinating morning in the field and learn all about Bluebirds! The job of visiting the 43 boxes, counting eggs and fledglings, recording observations, and cleaning/repairing boxes is a very valuable service to the Bluebirds and to Birdsong. Bring a friend and help the Bluebird! Call for more information (229)377-4408.

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

April 11, 2015

**Weather** It has been an unusual late winter and spring. We continued to have a lot of rain into early March, with thundershowers almost every week. It really inhibited our cool season burn plans. Then Spring, in all its green glory, happened early and suddenly. The spring flowering trees came and went quickly. The Birdsong pear tree by the Barn, which we usually get to enjoy in its full white lacy bloom for at least a week or more, flowered and was done in a matter of days, with bronze leaves coming out before the flowering was over. The dogwoods, redbuds, and jasmine appeared. Then the greening of the woods occurred. It happened very quickly and left some of us feeling quite confused. It was stunningly beautiful, the emergence of pale green leaf buds on what seemed like every hardwood tree in the forest and roadside and then the onrush of full leafing out happened in just a few days. I have the good fortune of driving to work on Meridian Road, and I really do believe that the trees I saw in the morning had leafed out noticeably by my evening drive home.

Then the temperature rose. It got very warm, again earlier than expected, bringing a sense of foreboding about the upcoming summer months. We shall see. Somehow the entire experience has made some of us feel like we missed out on spring – it all happened so fast. We are trying to enjoy each day, with the ongoing deepening of green occurring everywhere. This gets said every year, but it is always so wonderful to see each tree with its own individual shade of green that continues to deepen until the trees are fully leafed out and the colors blend together. It is also wonderful to observe that our communities are still full of big beautiful hardwood trees that contribute to our high quality of life and that of our wildlife.

**Purple Martins** The Purple Martins arrived on February 28<sup>th</sup>, two weeks later than last year, and a month later than the historical norm. We had been waiting, worried. For many decades, the Martins arrived in late January, sometimes on Betty Komarek's birthday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, always an occasion for celebration. (Upon their arrival, Betty used to make us go out by the pole and do the Martin Dance, an exuberant, joyful, some might say silly, welcoming display. I always enjoyed it. Who knows what the Martins thought.) After Hurricane Andrew, their arrival and departure dates became less predictable, having always been like clockwork, late January and the fourth of July. In the last several years, they have been arriving later – last year it was on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, this year two weeks later. We are sure that they are very tuned in to weather patterns and we did have some extensive rains and cold that last couple of weeks, so they may have been biding their time so that a system could clear out in advance of the big trip. They migrate from South America, primarily Brasil.

This year, on a Saturday working outside around the office, I realized I was hearing a familiar sound. At the exact same moment, Chuck phoned to say there were Martins at

the gourds. What a relief! They had arrived! There were eight birds, perching on the pole and in the top of the nearby pecan tree; they were doing big circular fly-bys; they were investigating the gourds and making their joyful presence known with their marvelous Martin racket. They settled in immediately, as if they had been here for weeks. Soon another six birds arrived, and within another five days we had a full house of twenty birds, a pair for each of our gourds.

They put on a wonderful show at the Plant Sale. It started the night before at the Preview Party. Towards the end of the evening, they began coming in from their day's foray away, spiraling down from up high with the usual calling and chortling, then circling the pole and landing, with everyone finally accounted for. The next day at the Sale, they spent all morning at the pole right next to the tallying tent, only ten feet away from our guests and customers, entertaining everyone with a lot of loud and melodious commentary.

This week they have been very interesting to watch from the nearby pump house bench. They have gotten themselves sorted out and mates and gourds have been chosen and claimed. They had been seen collecting grass from the ground nearby, so Chuck started running water into the clay road ruts right in front of the pole and letting it sink in. The females loved this, and began flying down and collecting beakfuls of wet clay mixed with grass clippings and carrying it straight back to the gourds. Mike Miller called it "adobe", very apt, as they use this to build a very solid nest. In cases where the gourd's entrance hole is angled below the fullest part of the round gourd, we can see where the female is building a kind of sill or barrier, apparently so that eggs or young will not easily roll out. This activity has gone on all week, every morning, then the Martins take off and spend the afternoon away and come back later and continue collecting clay. It is very charming to see where they have been working – there are small bird footprints and beak prints in the mud. We think they may have finished this stage of nest building, as today's "puddle" has of yet no prints in it.

We invite you to come out and enjoy watching these beautiful migratory birds as they settle well into the nesting process. They really are fun to observe and are quite unconcerned – they let us get very close to the pole. They are also extremely photogenic and tolerant of nearby humans with cameras, so bring your camera next time you visit.

**Screech Owl** The last time the Screech Owl was seen was on February 25<sup>th</sup>. We had been able to tell visitors "Would you like to see a Screech Owl? Let me show you where he is" and if it was a cold day, we could walk to the parking area and there he would be on his longleaf branch 30 feet up, eyes closed facing the sun, still, resembling a nearby pine cone. We knew he would eventually move on, since it was clear he did not care for roosting on too warm a day and spring was coming, and we also knew that mating season was approaching. Even though we had a number of very cold days after the last sighting, he was gone, so we assume

that he had found a mate and a nesting cavity and was beginning to raise a family. We would love to know where he is, so if you notice a Screech Owl on your next trip to Birdsong, let us know. There may be babies nearby. We will be watching closely next fall when the mornings are cold for a well camouflaged little owl on a longleaf bough.

**American Robins** The Robin Phenomenon, thousands of Robins flying in to roost, had wound down by our last newsletter. We continued to see many Robins at Birdsong, and there was a small group that continued roosting in the neighbor's bamboo thicket. We continued to enjoy their presence around the gardens, in the bath at the Bird Window, along the trails in the grass after a rain, and in the Pecan Trees just before dark up until February 26th. They have moved north, called to their spring breeding grounds. We will look forward to seeing them again next winter and will be watching for another stream of rust-breasted birds flying in for the night.

**Land Management** With all the rain, we did not get an actual cool-season burn done this year. We prefer to burn the Gin House Field in winter to remove the dry grassy fuel and put down a nice layer of ash to fertilize the many grasses and herbaceous flowering plants that come up in spring and summer. Since we could not get that done this winter, we will do some experimental mowing and harrowing and possibly burning, on small sections this summer to see if we can control the winged sumac and briars that spread and take up space we'd prefer to have filled with native grasses and wildflowers. The abundant plant and animal species in the Gin House Field all play a part in a diverse and interconnected food web. During the growing season, it is alive with a variety of plants, flowering at different times and attracting pollinators all season long, and it is loaded with insects, spiders, small rodents, and birds, making it very attractive to predators. It is important for us to keep it in good shape as an early succession stage field, one of Birdsong's many interesting wildlife habitats. We didn't get to burn here the way we prefer, but it won't harm it to miss a year, and we will experiment to see if we can make some improvements by other means.

We are getting ready to burn the east wing of Birdsong in the next few days. We have had some dry weather, and the humidity is supposed to stay low enough for us to get a good burn in. We want to burn hot in some areas where sweet gum, American beautyberry and other woody brush is taking hold. It is not a bad thing to have some brushy patches in the woods, places where a turkey can nest, or a doe can drop a fawn, but along the east line we want more open areas for native groundcover plants to thrive and be part of the food web and pollination system. We are assembling an excellent burn crew and looking forward to lighting that match!

**The Bird Window** has been a very busy place and continues to attract some unusual birds. Up until April 3<sup>rd</sup>, we were still seeing the Yellow-breasted Chat daily, in full courtship plumage, the yellow of his chest an even deeper gold. We have also had more sightings of the Painted 6

Bunting male and Bob Dunn has gotten some excellent photos of him, which we will post on the Facebook and Twitter sites. What a stunning bird! We still have Gray Catbirds and are hoping they will stay this year and nest at Birdsong, which would be a first. Today there was a Catbird at the Window enjoying Mahonia grapes. We know it is a now-undesirable plant, but we can't bring ourselves to tear it out of the Bird Window landscape just yet. We had a few visits by a Yellow-throated Vireo. A Hermit Thrush was here regularly until recently. We still have some very colorful White-throated Sparrows, and Bob got a photo of a Song Sparrow too. The latest beautiful visitor is a brightly colored Indigo Bunting male, interested in the corn and the shower and bath. We commented last time on how very few Goldfinches, Chipping Sparrows, and Pine Siskins we had this year, compared to past years. That remains the case. We still have our six Siskins busy on the black oil sunflower seed. The Ruby-throated Hummingbird arrived on March 18, several days later than its typical March 15<sup>th</sup> arrival.

**Wild Azaleas** The Wild Azaleas made a wonderful showing this spring, in the woods and around the gardens. These truly are one of the most attractive spring flowering shrubs; they are intensely fragrant and provide excellent nectaring opportunities for our early butterflies. They were a colorful presence this year near the Big Bay Swamp drain and along the bank to the Listening Place.

It is a beautiful time of year. Please come out and enjoy the richness and green of late spring at Birdsong. The Chickadees and Brown-headed Nuthatches are already producing broods, the Bluebirds now have eggs in the nest, and we are beginning to see migrants coming through on the red mulberry – the Cedar Waxwings are here! The morning air is still cool and refreshing and the frogs are calling. The present moment at Birdsong is a wonderful place to be.

-KDB



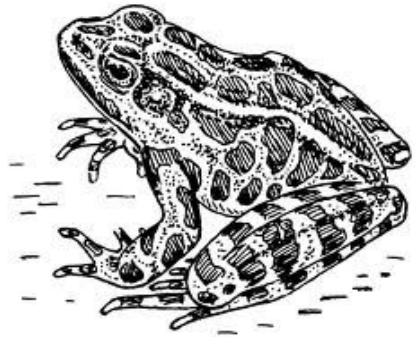
**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:**

***Program Volunteers***

Marvin Collins, for leading *Spring Birding at Birdsong*  
Julie Shuttles and the Golden Triangle RD&C, for bringing us the *Longleaf Pine Workshop*  
Nancy Thomas, for leading *Music to our Ears: A Chorus of Frogs*  
Sandra Sallee, for leading *Take a Child Outside for Earth Day!*

***Special Financial Gifts***

JoAnn Orr, in Honor of Alice Honea  
Joe Peresich  
Briarcliff Garden Club  
Carole Hayes  
Victor and Cynthia Nunez  
Ruth Rennick  
Rambler Rose Garden Club  
Keith and Becky McNeill



***Memorial Gifts***

In Memory of Vincent J. Brady, from Gwendolyn Waldorf and Dana Bryan  
In Memory of Jacquelin Flemming, from Pat and Bill Prescott

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

Jane Wakefield, Robin Brous, JCC of New Jersey, Ward Kanowsky, Ian Spanier, Alan Golds, Laura and Chris Owens, Eugene T. and Ann K. DiSalvo, Joseph and Mary Schaefer, Joanna Berritt, John and Ellen Petas, Suzanne Smith, Monica Ianelli, Millie Maumbusch, Joseph and Joanne DiSalvo, Marie Puccio, Mary Kay Nobles, Matthew Moro, The Cohen and Pesce Families, and Marilyn and Randy Rhea

***Special Thanks To:***

Nancy Ann Thomas, our dedicated Friday Bird Window volunteer, for helping visitors and taking such good care of the birds and the Bird Window. We appreciate all Nancy does, including her wonderful frog presentation and walk. Look for her next two programs in this newsletter!  
Bob Dunn, for giving us a booklet of his photos of Bird Window birds – they are lovely photos and will help you learn your birds!  
Alan Strowd, for volunteering at the Bird Window every other Saturday. We also offer special thanks for his work on developing the 2015 budget and his presentation to the Board.  
Myles Black and Bob Bearss, for leading the new season’s Bluebird Trail Monitoring. Thanks to volunteers Dr. David Jones and our two groups of families and students for assisting  
The Candelario and Albritton families, our homeschool group from Valdosta, for their ongoing volunteering at Birdsong. This month they continued work on the garden improvement project and made a big difference! Thank you to Beth Candelario, for her kindness to the Birdsong staff.  
Don and Hazel Dixon, for all their support and their many contributions to Birdsong.  
Joe Peresich, for continued improvements to our Facebook page, and for ongoing website and Paypal management.  
Tami Tomasello, for being our social media coordinator and managing our Twitter site so expertly.  
Butterfly Garden volunteers Donna Legare, Bob Bearss, Beth Grant, Myles Black, Jan Blue, and Chris Alexander for keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful!

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

<b>President</b>	Joe Peresich
<b>Secretary</b>	Margie McInnes
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bill Preston

**Directors**

Jim Antista	Dale Aldridge
Woody Search	Joe Newborn
Brenda Coy	Jack Weiss

**BIRDSONG’S CORPORATE SPONSORS**

Hopping, Green & Sams, PA  
May Nursery  
Monrovia Growers of Georgia  
Native Nurseries  
O’Toole’s Herb Farm  
Trillium Gardens  
The Great Bicycle Shop  
Thomasville Nursery  
Corporation Service Company  
Deerwood, LLC  
Cairo Family Medical Center





## NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG

### ***Tallahassee***

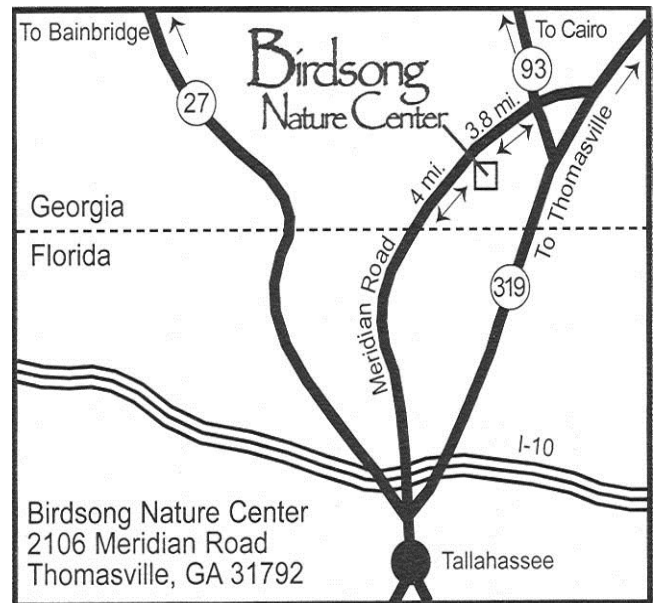
Jason and Susan Lichtstein	Greg Holder
Henry H Boyter, Jr	Keith Baker
Sam and Nancy Bennett	LuMarie Pdirka-West
Nancy Louise Kelley	Jim Erickson
Nancy Spears	John Crocker
Lana Arnold	LaDonna & Scott Wagers
Cathy Adkinson	Brian Lloyd
Allen Smith	

### ***Thomasville***

Marshall Ochs	Angela Kellum
Becky Bracey	Joe and Marilynn Parker
June Dollar	Keith Beverly
Teresa Brown	Maragert Levings
Kim & Scooter Grubbs	Edie Garmon

### ***Other Areas:***

Nanci Slemmer	Annapolis, MD
Jeanette Sickel	Whigham, GA
Joan & Barney Stallworth	Quincy, FL
Bill & Anne Avery	Monticello, FL
Mary Fairecloth	Quincy, FL
Howard & Vicki Barnett	Monticello, GA
Connie Lechnar	Havana, FL
George McEntire	Havana, FL
Julia & Brian Davis	Quincy, FL
Virginia Smith	Cairo, GA
Donna Butler Lowman	Havana, FL
Martha Reed	Lyndonville, VT
Jayne Jarris	Thomasville, GA
Doug & Diane Croley	Havana, FL
Richard Higgins	Crawfordville, FL



### **DIRECTIONS:**

From Tallahassee: Meridian Road north, 4 miles past FL/ GA border (marked by a blue sign that reads Grady Co.), on right side of road. OR 319 north, turn left onto Rt. 93, then turn left onto Meridian Road, 3.8 miles on left side of road.

From Thomasville: 319 south, turn right at Shell gas station onto Meridian Road, approximately 5 miles from Shell or 3.8 miles from stop sign at Rt. 93, on left side of road.

Watch for small sign that reads "Birdsong".

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

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