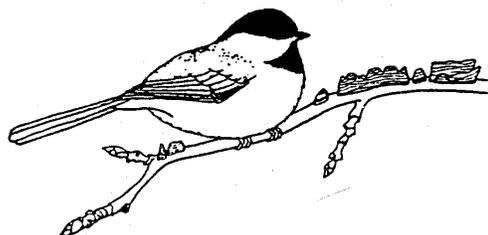


Birdsong Nature



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March - April 2020

March

Wed.	March 4	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Thurs.	March 5	Butterfly Garden Work Day.
Sat.	March 7	Free Family Day Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sun.	March 8	Butterfly Gardening with Native Plants
Sat.	March 14	Small Landowner Stewardship Group at Tall Timbers
Wed.	March 18	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sat.	March 21	14th Annual OLD TIMEY PLANT SALE Bluebird Trail Monitoring

April

Wed.	April 1	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Thurs.	April 2	Butterfly Garden Work Day
Sat.	April 4	Free Family Day Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sat.	April 11	Spring Trail Ride
Wed.	April 15	Bluebird Trail Monitoring
Sat.	April 18	Bluebird Trail Monitoring Take a Child Outside for Earth Day
Wed.	April 29	Bluebird Trail Monitoring



BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER

WEB SITE: www.birdsongnaturecenter.org

EMAIL: birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org

TWITTER: @BirdsongNatureC

FACEBOOK: Birdsong Nature Center

YOUTUBE: Birdsong Nature Center



BIRD WINDOW AND TRAIL HOURS

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

Bird Window and Nature Trails

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

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

Registration

Please register for all programs by calling or emailing: (229) 377-4408, Birdsong Office

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

Dear Friends,

An important day for gardeners in our area will soon be here – Birdsong’s *Old-Timey Plant Sale* is Saturday, March 21, from 9AM to 1PM. Our good friend June Bailey White and her excellent team of Plant Sale volunteers have been preparing all year to make our 14th Annual Old-Timey Plant Sale another memorable experience. We hope you will join us for this very special event, enjoy the camaraderie of hundreds of other gardeners on a lovely spring day, and return home with beautiful, healthy additions for your garden. We will be providing updates on social media, web site, and in emails. Please join us on March 21 and discover why Birdsong’s Old-Timey Plant Sale has become one of the areas most anticipated nature-lover’s events of the year.

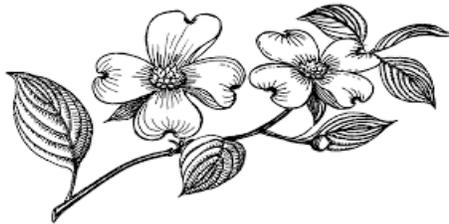
If you would like to become a corporate sponsor for the Plant Sale, we would sincerely appreciate your support and would gratefully acknowledge your participation in announcements and advertisements for the Sale. If you would like to volunteer for the event, we welcome your help and have a great job for you. Please contact our Director, Kathleen Brady, at 229-377-4408 as soon as possible if you would like to become a sponsor or volunteer.

Of special note - please see the update from Kathleen regarding our grant application with the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program on page 6.

We can never say “thank you” enough to our wonderful volunteers, members, and donors who contribute their invaluable time, talents, and financial support to Birdsong. This special place wouldn’t be here today for all to enjoy without their generous spirit and hard work. Thank you for helping make the Nature Center the vibrant resource and treasure that it is to our community.

Looking forward to seeing you March 21 at the Old-Timey Plant Sale!

Sincerely,
Joe Peresich
President, Board of Directors



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

OLD-TIMEY PLANT SALE, MARCH 21, 2020

It’s plant sale time again! On March 21, 9:00 — 1:00, Birdsong will hold its 14th Old-Timey Plant Sale.

Every year we think of new ways to make the sale run smoothly and to make the area interesting and pleasing to the eye. John Brinson at Monticello Nurseries gave us dozens of boxwood bushes and this year we plan to “landscape,” lining walkways and creating vistas with rows of boxwoods. We’re also getting some fine big magnolia trees from John that will serve as focal points (until they are sold)

Dreaming up these creative ideas is fun while sitting in an easy chair on long winter evenings, but putting it all together in one short day is hard work for our many volunteers. We would love to have your help. Call 229 377 4408 if you’d like to work on Thursday March 19, the main set-up day. We will provide a hearty lunch from Grits in Cairo for all who come to help.

We also want to remind everyone of the pre-sale Preview Party on Friday March 20 starting at 6:00. This is always a beautiful evening at Birdsong. Everything will be in place and just so, not yet messed about by Saturday’s eager shoppers. Delicious food will be served by Lagran Saunders and Ben Baldwin, we’ll have music by The Biscuit Boys, oysters on the half shell, beer and wine. Let us know by Friday March 13 if you’d like to attend. The cost is \$100 for one person, \$150 for two. Attending the party is an extremely pleasant way to contribute to Birdsong and buy plants before the Saturday crowds.

We hope to see you on one or all of these days!

- June White



**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER
OLD-TIMEY PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2020
9 AM - 1 PM**



Birdsong Nature Center's Old-Timey Plant Sale Committee is working hard to make this fourteenth annual sale the best ever. The sale will offer a varied and extensive collection of beloved old garden plants, heirloom tomatoes, and plants for butterflies and birds. There will be lots of native trees, shrubs, and perennials especially suited to our area, including many varieties of wild azaleas, and some rare and unusual native plants. Knowledgeable and friendly horticulturists will be volunteering at the sale to help you make a selection for your own garden. Come out and welcome Spring at the Birdsong Plant Sale!

**Native trees and shrubs
Hundreds of native azaleas
Wildflowers
Old-fashioned plants
Heirloom plants**

Nature-related gifts, books, t-shirts, and more for sale.

Lunch: hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers and more, or bring a picnic.

The Old-Timey *Plant Sale Preview Party* is being held on Friday evening, March 20th. Patrons may purchase plants in advance of the sale; there will be wine, hors d'oeuvres and music. The cost is \$100 per person or \$150 for a couple. Payment and registration must be received in the Birdsong office by Friday March 13th. Please call for more information 229-377-4408.

Would anyone be willing to lend us your garden cart, wagon, or other transport device to escort customers to their cars with their purchases? Please call: (229) 377-4408 , or email us at birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org.

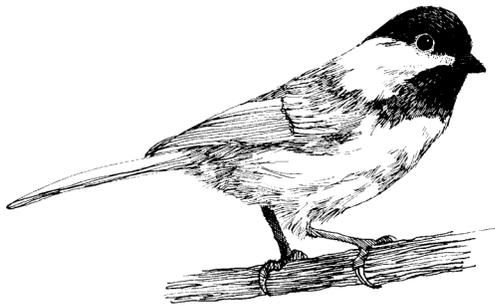
We need volunteers to help

- on Wednesday, March 18th, to rope off the parking lot and set up the plant station signs.
- on Thursday March 19th - this is our biggest set-up day, including labeling, pricing, and placing plants and signs, setting up tents and tables, and more. We provide a lovely lunch for the volunteers on this day.
- on Saturday, March 21st, sale day, we need volunteers to work 2-3 hour shifts between 8 AM and 2 PM. These jobs may include: parking, greeting visitors, answering the phone, working at Birdsong's Gift Shop, serving food and drinks, helping transport customers' purchases to their cars and tearing down.

Please call 229-377-4408 or email birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org for more information and to sign up!

FREE FAMILY DAYS
First Saturdays
March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6
Admission: free

On first Saturdays from March to June admission will be free and we will offer a \$5-off membership special. If you know of any families who have never been to Birdsong, please let them know about this opportunity. Please help us get the word out! This is a nice chance for first-time visitors to see what Birdsong has to offer. (Please note: free admission does not apply to scheduled programs or events occurring on these dates.)



SPRING TRAIL RIDE
To a few places less travelled
Saturday, April 11
10:00AM - Noon

Join Executive Director Kathleen Brady for a spring trail ride around Birdsong. We will make a number of stops and take some short walks to a few places we seldom go: the Buckeye Slope, to see if any hardwood hammock flowers are blooming; the woods along the south line to check on *Erythrina* and the young longleaf pines; and the Azalea Garden, just in case any wild azaleas are still blooming. Along the way we will observe some recent burns, discuss Birdsong's ecology, land management, fire program, and history; and visit places such as the Star Pasture, Farm Pond, the Listening Place, and others. We will point out gopher tortoise burrows and look for courting birds and signs of wildlife.

RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. Please call by noon on Friday, April 10th to reserve a space. We will be taking the truck and trailer and there is room for 12 people. Be prepared to be outdoors for several hours; dress for the weather and bring binoculars.

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

BUTTERFLY GARDENING
WITH NATIVE PLANTS
Sunday, March 8
2 – 4PM

Beth Grant will provide a slideshow on butterfly gardening and lead a discussion on the need for pollinators, the importance of native plants for their support, plants that grow well in our area, and ideas on how to integrate them into your present landscape. She will then take participants out to visit Birdsong's Butterfly Garden. This is the perfect time of year to learn about butterfly gardening – spring is here, it is planting time, and your garden will be ready when the butterflies appear!

Beth has volunteered at the Birdsong Butterfly Garden for over a decade, has planted and maintains butterfly gardens at her home and those of relatives, and is the lead volunteer at Cherokee Lake Pollinator Garden next to the Rose Garden in Thomasville. She has taught *Bringing Nature Home* about 50 times, both at Birdsong and elsewhere. This is an excellent presentation based on Douglas Tallamy's book about the importance of native plants for the survival of biodiversity. On March 21st from 9am to 1pm you can visit her for advice on selecting plants at the Birdsong Plant Sale, where she will be the lead volunteer at the section on butterfly/pollinator native nectar and larval host plants.

No charge. Please call to let us know you are coming – the meeting room accommodates 18 people.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORK DAYS
Thursdays, March 5 and April 2
9:00AM to Noon

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

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.

BLUEBIRD TRAIL MONITORING
The 2020 Nesting Season is Beginning!

March 4, 7, 18, 21
April 1, 4, 15, 18, 29
9AM

The Bluebird Monitoring season is beginning. Bluebirds are singing out around the Barn and Gin House Field and the males are intensely blue! Our Bluebird Trail team checks nest boxes every other Wednesday and Saturday. Join our veteran Bluebird volunteer leaders Bob Bearss and Myles Black 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 and repairing boxes is a very valuable service to the Bluebirds and to Birdsong. Bring a friend and help the Eastern Bluebird! Call for more information: (229)377-4408.

**TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE
FOR EARTH DAY!**
Saturday, April 18
9:30 – 11:30AM

Celebrate upcoming Earth Day (April 22) a few days early with your favorite child or children. Leader Sandra Sallee will take you on a natural adventure in the woods at Birdsong. To honor this special occasion, give an ongoing gift to your child: an appreciation of the Earth, our home; a better understanding of where they live; and the use of all their senses. Walk the trails and search for evidence of animal homes, signs of their presence, and springtime behavior. Enjoy the fresh air, some exercise, and explore nature with your child in the great outdoors. After the walk Sandra will help your child make a natural craft.

RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. Call or email by Friday, April 17th to reserve your space.

\$4 Friends, \$6 nonmembers, children half-price. Includes a handout and resource list for year-round activities with children.

**REGISTER WITH AMAZONSMILE
AND SUPPORT BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER**

If you like to shop on Amazon.com, registering with AmazonSmile will enable you to support Birdsong every time you shop, at no cost to you. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases on Amazon to Birdsong Nature Center, one of AmazonSmile's registered charities. (Donations are made by the AmazonSmile Foundation and are not tax deductible by you.) If you have an existing Amazon account, all your shopping cart, Wish List, and registry settings will remain the same. Go to smile.amazon.com for more information about this program and sign up to benefit Birdsong!

**SMALL LANDOWNERS STEWARDSHIP
GROUP**

Saturday, March 14
At the Komarek Education Center
Tall Timbers Research Station
9am – 3pm

If you are a small acreage landowner and would like to discuss your plans, interests and challenges with fellow landowners, please join us for an upcoming quarterly meeting at the Komarek Education Center at Tall Timbers Research Station. This is an informal group – no minutes, no board, no fees - we gather to share information and resources relevant to our unique circumstances. This group was started and is informally organized and led by Jim Stevenson, formerly chief naturalist of the Florida State Parks and chairman of the Florida Springs Task Force and his wife Tara Tanaka, award-winning wildlife photographer extraordinaire. Having dealt with their own interesting challenges involving conservation-minded land ownership, Jim and Tara organized this informal group so that small landowners can help each other and share resources. This is a wonderful way to meet and talk to some very talented, interesting people who are managing their land using best ecological practices.

The agenda is different every meeting. We have learned about a range of pertinent issues: conservation easements, the value of a snag, prescribed burning, how to control invasive plants, how to safely operate a chain saw, and more. There is also a session offered by a featured landowner, usually involving slides, about their own property. At last year's July meeting, Birdsong provided a session on its land management, featuring our prescribed burn program.

On March 14th, these topics will be discussed: controlling invasives: Tallow, Ardesia and Kudzu, neighbor relations, choosing a land management consultant, and "What is the Future of Your Land". We convene at 9am for sessions, break for lunch and conversation at noon, and reconvene for afternoon sessions until 3pm. There is always ample time for private discussion and sharing. Bring your lunch; dress casually. Feel free to request session topics of interest to you. For more information you may email Jim Stevenson at florida_springs@comcast.net. Please join us – these meetings are very worthwhile!

GEORGIA OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM GRANT UPDATE

Last year the state of Georgia 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. This amendment provides sales tax funding from the sales of outdoor sporting and recreational equipment. In the November-December newsletter, we announced that Birdsong had entered into a partnership with Tall Timbers Research Station to apply for this funding to enable Tall Timbers to purchase a conservation easement on the 444 acres of Birdsong land currently unencumbered by such an easement. The GOSP grant pre-application was submitted on October 31st, the grant deadline.

Fifty-eight applications from around the state were reviewed by GOSP/DNR staff and ranked by a point system. On January 7th the GOSP Trust Fund Board met to approve a slate of the highest-ranked projects and staff presented their results. Fourteen projects qualified based on the ranking and the Tall Timbers/Birdsong project was ranked thirteenth. At this meeting, DNR said they would not announce the results publicly until this slate was approved by the Georgia DNR Board in late January.

Two weeks later, this board called an emergency meeting and revised the list of projects to be funded. Apparently the Georgia Department of Revenue told them originally that there were \$34 million dollars in the fund for the GOSP grant cycle. However, they realized that a mistake had been made and that that figure had included state and local tax income. This figure was incorrect; local sales tax should not have been included in the calculation. The new total was around \$20 million dollars, so only the top eight projects will now be funded. The six projects ranked 9th to 14th will now not be funded in this year's grant cycle, including the Tall Timbers/Birdsong project.

Needless to say, the boards and staff of both Tall Timbers and Birdsong Nature Center were very disappointed with this development. We believe we have an excellent and competitive proposal that supports a very worthwhile project so we plan to submit the grant once more. DNR will announce the new funding cycle and submission deadline in mid-April and then we'll update our proposal and re-submit. We will keep you posted on any further developments. If you have any questions, you may email Kathleen Brady at: kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter.org.

LEARN AND BURN

A hands-on prescribed burn workshop led by Golden Triangle RC&D

On January 23, Golden Triangle RC&D staff, led by Implementation Manager Julie Shutters, held a hands-on educational workshop in the open air behind the Barn at Birdsong Nature Center. Birdsong and our volunteer burn crew coordinated with Julie and her foresters Justin Smith and Jim Bradley to provide a day-long opportunity for 31 landowners, foresters, NRCS clients and others to learn about the benefits of ecological land management, specifically prescribed burning. In the morning we gathered outdoors and inspected a site Birdsong had prepared for a demonstration burn, then enjoyed several excellent educational presentations about fire. Unfortunately it drizzled most of the morning, but we took shelter under the Barn and pressed on. After lunch, good conversation, equipment demonstrations and more information, we decided to go ahead with a burn. The weather was not ideal for burning the original site, so we quickly re-grouped and Alan prepped the west House Pasture. Justin and Jim distributed and explained how to use the burn equipment and the group went out and burned the Pasture with the support of the Birdsong burn crew. Even though we were in somewhat close quarters for that many participants, it was a good demonstration of basic principles, tools, weather requirements and safety.

We want to thank Julie Shutters and her team for choosing to hold this workshop at Birdsong Nature Center. A big part of Birdsong's mission is to educate the public about the importance of prescribed fire and fire ecology, and this workshop gave us an opportunity to work in partnership with an organization with similar goals. Please have a look at Golden Triangle's website at www.goldentrianglercd.org. This interesting organization is doing great work in conservation, forestry, and agriculture in southwest Georgia. If you are a landowner and need some support or education about best land management practices, call Julie at 229-723-3841; she offers a lot of classes year-round. We are honored to be working in partnership with Julie, Executive Director Rhonda Gordon, and their colleagues – thank you!

For more support please also see the article on page 5 about the Small Landowner Stewardship Group and join us for the March 14th meeting. You can also join our volunteer burn crew for hands-on training and experience; email Kathleen at kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter.org.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT REPORT

Thank you, Sharman and Gavin Franklin, for leading the Great Backyard Bird Count again this year!

Birdsong Nature Center, Grady, Georgia, US

Feb 14, 8:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Protocol: Traveling 4.0 mile(s)

35 species, 160 individuals

Mourning Dove 1

Anhinga 1

Turkey Vulture 3

Northern Harrier 1

Red-shouldered Hawk 2

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1

Red-bellied Woodpecker 7

Downy Woodpecker (Eastern) 2

Pileated Woodpecker 1

Eastern Phoebe 2

White-eyed Vireo 1

Blue-headed Vireo 1

Blue Jay 5

American Crow 3

Carolina Chickadee 3

Tufted Titmouse 7

Purple Martin 5

Tree Swallow 11

Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1

White-breasted Nuthatch (Eastern) 1

Winter Wren 1

Carolina Wren 5

Gray Catbird 5

Brown Thrasher 1

Eastern Bluebird 7

Hermit Thrush 2

American Goldfinch 3

White-throated Sparrow 3

Swamp Sparrow 3

Eastern Towhee (Red-eyed) 9

Red-winged Blackbird 33

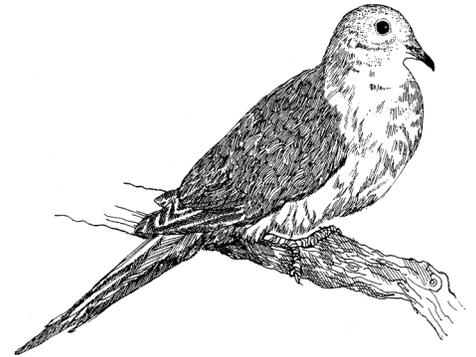
Orange-crowned Warbler 1

Pine Warbler 12

Yellow-rumped Warbler 3

Northern Cardinal 13

View this checklist online at <https://ebird.org/gbbc/checklist/S64472732>



THE WINTER SOLSTICE AT BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER

Illuminating Site: Star Pasture

December 14, 2019

We enjoyed a most extraordinary evening at the Winter Solstice Celebration this past December. Velma Frye led us into dusk with cheerful songs of the holiday season and in celebration of the beautiful blue planet that we all share - “orbiting at 19 miles a second, so it's reckoned, the sun that is the source of all our power”! Bradley White and his many friends evoked a primal sense of place playing didgeridoo, flute and drum as Kathleen lit the great bonfire while Velma sang.

Josephine Garibaldi and Paul Zmolek of Callous Physical Theater guided us into a performance/art experience called *Illuminating Site: Star Pasture* and led celebrants in an illuminated procession out to the Star Pasture in the center of the Gin House Field, each of us carrying a beautiful handmade nature-inspired lantern, personally crafted by Jo and Paul. From the bonfire to the Star Pasture, our path was lined by over 200 of these exquisite lanterns under a clear night sky filled with brilliant stars and planets. There, encircled by lanterns while shooting stars streaked across the sky, we were treated to an inspired performance by Bridget Close, Aaron Ellis, Scott Lindenberg and Mackenzie Payne, students of FSU's Department of Dance. It was quite a night at Birdsong, an enchanting experience, and a most memorable Winter Solstice Celebration. Our sincere thanks to Velma, Bradley and friends, Josephine, Paul and their wonderful performers for a truly magical and unforgettable evening!

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

February 18, 2020

Weather I know this isn't news to you, but over the past year or so, when I start writing these notes for you, I find myself saying over and over again that we are having strange, unusual, uncommon weather. Every single time. It is the same this time, except I want to say that the weather has been even more peculiar than ever before. This in fact is the weirdest winter, if you can call it that, than I can recall. Ever. We've only had a few scattered frosts, no extended freezing for nights in a row; and there have been periods of consecutive days in the high seventies. This is not typical. Of course there is plenty of variability to be expected in nature, at any time, but clearly we are experiencing an extended and disturbing trend. And I'm having a hard time adjusting to it, much less accepting it. It makes me extremely uneasy – there is this backdrop of things going on out there that are not supposed to happen for another month or more. For example, there is a wild azalea near Mirhi's office that started blooming in late January. This isn't supposed to happen until March. It is still blooming, going strong, weeks later. It smells divine, and there was a spicebush swallowtail enjoying the blossoms on it yesterday. The old pear tree by the Barn is in full bloom right now and leafing out - this started 10 days ago. I went to check on it yesterday and the tender new leaves are a beautiful bronze color, and the flowers are loaded with honeybees and bumblebees. Usually we don't see the pear tree bloom till the week of the Plant Sale in mid-March. The mulberries are leafing out and their green flowers are showing. The yellow jasmine shrub is in full golden bloom. That early spring green mist in the woods has started. Yes, it is beautiful, but I feel all off-balance and I don't like it. Cycles I have trusted and depended on all my adult life are being disrupted and I find it extremely confusing on a daily basis. There, tantrum over. I will find a way to adapt to all this. Maybe. What is this going to mean for our summer this year?

At least we are getting some rain, which is very welcome. In January we got 2.40 inches, in February 2.29 for a total of 4.69. Well under last year's average, but it has brought relief. We are glad to have some water flowing through the creeks and drains, so we can rely on them for firebreaks when we burn.

Land Management We are planning our second burn of the year and hope to implement it this coming weekend. The first one was done as part of the Golden Triangle Prescribed Burn Workshop, described on page 5. Therefore, this is really the beginning of the season for our crew, and it is Year Two of our three-year effort to get the place into really good shape, utilizing some good hot burns in places that need a lot of brush removal. We were extremely pleased with the results of last year's effort, and our team is excited to work together again. This season we will be burning in three or four relatively small sections that

we did not get to last time where we want to clear out woody brush, such as Letz Mill, the edge of the bay near the Live Oak hammock, and if at all possible, the bay edge of the Azalea Garden. We also will be burning again through the Wildlife Woods, an area that had not had a good burn in several years.

We had hoped to run a fast burn through the young longleaf pines, now inhabiting what used to be called Big Bay Field, in January before they started to "candle", or show their vulnerable growing tips in the center of the stem. With the welcome rain and a truck breakdown that time has passed. I visited them the other day and most of the trees are pushing out the white central growing bud. We'll now wait until late April or May or until the new needles have grown out. We are very pleased with the growth of these trees – many of them are now well over 10 feet tall. They were planted in the spring of 2016. Big Bay Field will be Big Bay Forest sooner than we thought!

The Harrier Our beautiful harrier is still here, hunting in the Gin House Field. Alan gets to see her more often than anyone else. She is often seen, working her way around the field, cruising slowly in a grid pattern. For such a big hawk, she is amazingly elusive – the other day I saw her from the Star Pasture, back to the east, flying slowly north to south and back again, when she spotted something and dropped down into the broomsedge out of sight. I saw her descend right in front of a longleaf pine, so kept my sights on that exact spot without looking away as I walked back in her direction, hoping to see her rise up with those wide wonderful wingbeats, perhaps with prey. I got all the way to the pine tree and never saw her leave. I don't see how she could have been still there – the grass was fairly short and sparse in that area so she could not have been hidden. I don't know how she did it, but she got out of there without me seeing a thing. Wonderful! On one occasion, another Harrier was also flying in the field, a male, as he was gray in color. He followed her along the south tree line, and then she swung up and perched in the cherry trees near the Star Pasture, facing him – he flew in right next to her and they did some sort of face-to-face greeting and calling. It looked like he was attempting to sit on the same perch next to her, lots of huge wings flapping. It looked like she was insisting he back off...which he did and commenced flying in a big circle around her. I kept on my walk, leaving them to their own affairs. I haven't seen him again, but we are still enjoying the privilege of seeing her – there is something deeply attractive about the way a harrier flies and moves - what a beautiful and powerful wild creature. She was spotted a few days ago by Sharman and Gavin Franklin on the Great Backyard Bird Count on February 14th. I hope you get to see her before she moves on.

Purple Martins We are happy to let you know that we had our first martin visit on Friday morning, February 7th. I was walking past the pole and a glossy male flew out of a gourd, no singing, no other martins in sight.

The next day, there were three, singing and talking and inspecting the gourds. Every day since then we have had a group of five or six martins visiting for most of the morning, making their joyful noise. The following Tuesday Alan and I went out and took down last year's gourds and replaced them with cleaned or new ones, while the group of martins looked on with interest from the nearby pecan tree. They are here, on time this year, and we are looking forward to a successful nesting season. You will certainly see and hear them at the Plant Sale - they spend the whole morning indignantly scolding everyone who comes through the tally line next to their pole!

Bird Window Every year in late November through early January we explain to visitors that this is the time of year when birds are less prevalent at the Window than any other time - there is plenty of wild food available for them, their babies are out, they don't need the supplemental food as much. Usually, with the very cold temperatures of January, we then see an influx of winter migrants and visiting birds. This year the winter birds didn't arrive en masse and it is very disturbing. Usually by mid-January, we have plenty of American Goldfinches, Chipping Sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Pine Siskins. This year we have only seen two Goldfinches, and that was last week, there have been one or two Yellow-rumps, and no Siskins at all. We don't typically get many winter ducks here, on our only open water pond, the Farm Pond, so we weren't directly aware of this, but folks who love to see thousands of ducks at St. Marks and some duck hunters we know have told us that the ducks just didn't arrive this year - apparently it didn't get cold enough up north for them to migrate and there was still food available. Obviously, we don't like where this is going. The good news, if you can call it that, is that a fair number of birds are being seen out on the property, and the numbers seem to be going up just in the last week or two. It just feels very different and very disconcerting to those of us who are used to a clear pattern in nature. These gradual shifts have been going on for the past year or so, but this year the evidence at the Bird Window is stark. We are very concerned. That all said, here are some of the species we have been pleased to observe since the first of January: Hermit Thrush (now a regular), Brown Thrasher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Gray Catbird, White-throated Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Pileated Woodpecker, White-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Black-and-white Warbler, American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Mourning Dove, Ground Dove, Eastern Wood Peewee, Cedar Waxwing, Orange-crowned Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet (flashing his ruby crown!), White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-throated Warbler, American Goldfinch, Pine Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, and an unusual visitor, a White-crowned Sparrow.

The regulars are here and busy: Cardinals, Jays, Towhees, Titmice, Carolina Wrens, and Carolina Chickadees.

The other day, we had two Black Vultures stop by - it was like old times. Those two really fill up a corn dish! We haven't seen them in months. We are also seeing the bullfrogs again and Bob Dunn took a really wonderful photo of a white-tailed Deer out in the right vista.

We are also missing two other Bird Window personalities this year: the pair of gray foxes. We've not seen them once. I guess it is just not cold enough to warrant them coming in for suet. We miss those two.

We wish everyone an enjoyable springtime. May you have wildflowers and blooming trees and birds galore. We will be watching what happens at the Bird Window, gardens, and woods and try to be hopeful and adapt to these new weather realities. I am sure there is harmony to be found, if we look. Please come see us and enjoy these cool days while we have them!

-KDB



IN MEMORY OF BETTY O'TOOLE

Elizabeth Fraleigh O'Toole left us on December 5, 2019 after a long illness. Known to many of us as "B", she was here in the early days of Birdsong and was a friend of Betty Komarek, an original Bluebird Trail Monitor, and served on the first board of directors. We all loved "B" for her sparkling personality, her sense of humor, and her passion for life. She is highly regarded for her gifts to us all: O'Toole's Herb Farm, its wonderful herbs, many courses, and opportunities available for the public; her ongoing yoga studio; and for establishing the importance of organic gardening and farming in our area. "B" was a radiant being; she had a tremendous impact on thousands of people, was an inspiration, and is deeply missed. We thank her for her conservation efforts, her teaching and sharing, and her endless enthusiasm and delight in nature and the people around her. The world is a better and more beautiful place because of "B" O'Toole.

BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:

Our Very Special Program Leaders:

WILD Women Sandra Sallee, Sharman Franklin, Teresa Adkins, Jane Storm and Carolyn Cohen, for sharing nature activities and information at the Birdsong booth at Tall Timbers' Red Hills Fire Festival that attracted over 1600 attendees! Sharman and Gavin Franklin, for expertly leading the Great Backyard Bird Count at Birdsong – they reported 35 species and 160 individuals – see list on page 7.

Memorial Gifts

We thank the following people for their gifts to Birdsong in loving memory of our dear friend, 'B'O'Toole: Donna and Jody Walthall, Dot Hayward, Jan Blue, Jane Storm, Dana Bryan and Gwendolyn Waldorf, Julia Neel, James Sale, Laurie and Karen Hosford, Jean Gilece, Frank and Rebecca Watson, Melissa Proctor, Trillium Gardens, Vanessa Crisler, Don and Ann Morrow.
A gift from Jane Storm "In memory of Betty O'Toole and Betty Jinright, both remarkable naturalists and great women! As was our Betty K!"

Special Financial Gifts:

Thank you to all who gave so generously to the 2019 Annual Appeal. Your gifts go to Birdsong's operating fund that supports the ongoing education and conservation efforts described in this newsletter year-round. Thank you!

Special Thanks To:

Alan Parker, for signing up with Network for Good and having his birthday gifts online be donated to Birdsong.
Our volunteer construction team has done more beautiful work on the Barn, completing the re-siding of the front, and fixing the roof on the Equipment Shed. We thank them all: Glen Berman, Buddy Holshouser, Steve Kunst, Mike Duggar, Mike Brezin and Andy Grayson.
David Johnson and Julius Ariail, for putting a photo of Birdsong taken by Julius on the cover of their new book, *Grace To Help in Time of Need*.
Winnie and Wolf Adolph, for having the Birdsong Gift Shop in beautiful shape for the holidays! Thank you too for making the suet cakes and taking good care of the birds and the Bird Window.
Bob Dunn and Wolf Adolph, for ongoing ID and photographic documentation of birds at the Bird Window; thank you Bob for the latest portrait of a White-tailed Deer in the right vista. Bob's photos are on display in Mirhi's office if you would like to see them.
Phil Gornicki, Bird Window volunteer, for helping visitors on Wednesdays and for his support on days we have a group visiting Birdsong. Thank you, too, to Hugh Boyter.
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 managing our Twitter site so expertly.
Butterfly Garden volunteers Donna Legare, Bob Bearss, Beth Grant, Ann Morrow, Connie, Jody Walthall and Jan Blue. Thanks to all for the keeping the Butterfly Garden beautiful! Thank you Jody, for pressure washing the arbor – people have been asking if it is new!
Dan Miller, and Dan with Alan Parker, for spending several days clearing out two sections of the House Garden, removing invasives, opening up some garden beds, and freeing up wild azaleas.

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

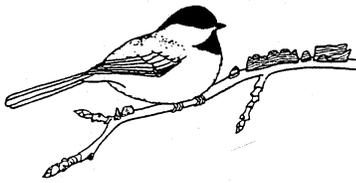
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Birdsong Nature Center

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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

Thomasville

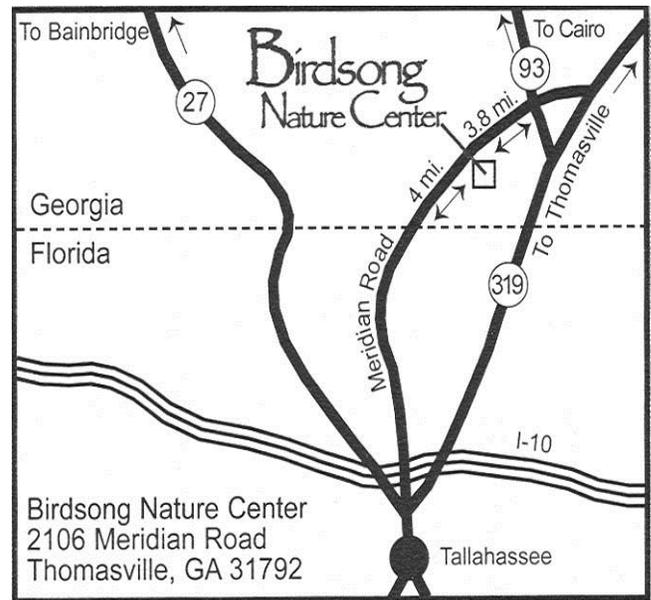
Barbara Jinright Altork
Tammie Wolff

Tallahassee

Tom Ostertag
Neal and Julie Avirett
Chase and Delilah Celeschi
Ken Winker

Other

Erin Cork Tifton, GA
Terry Mahoney Quincy, 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 Marathon gas station onto Meridian Road, approximately 5 miles from Marathon or 3.8 miles from stop sign at Rt. 93, on left side of road.

Watch for small sign that reads "Birdsong".

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