

# Birdsong Nature Center

November-December 2024

**TRAILS AND BIRD WINDOW OPEN WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS**

*Hours: Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays 9 to 5  
Sundays 1 to 5*

## November

- Sat. Nov. 2 Free Family Day  
Fall Plant Sale
- Thurs. Nov. 7 Butterfly Garden Workday  
Land Management Workday
- Sat. Nov. 16 Holiday Open House
- Thurs. Nov. 21 Land Management Workday

## December

- Thurs. Dec. 5 Butterfly Garden Workday  
Land Management Workday
- Sat. Dec. 7 Free Family Day  
Take a Child Outside for the Holidays!
- Sat. Dec. 14 Winter Solstice
- Thurs. Dec. 19 Land Management Workday

**Friday Dec. 20 Birdsong will be closed December 20 to January 3**

**January Jan. 3 Center Reopens Friday January 3, 2025**

*Please, no pets on Nature Center property.*

*Admission:* members, free; non-member adults, \$5.00; children 4-12, \$2.50

Dear Friends,

We would like to take this opportunity to again thank our very generous donors for their outstanding support of Birdsong's two recent major fundraising appeals: our "House and Garden Improvements Campaign" initiated in 2022, and our "New Tractor" campaign in 2023. As Kathleen outlines later in this newsletter, work on the House improvements is completed, the Garden project is a work in progress, and the new tractor, purchased earlier this year, is providing great service for our land management projects. We couldn't have made these great leaps forward without your support, and we could not thank you enough for so generously funding these major initiatives! Sincere thanks to our volunteer construction team for the amazing renovations and upgrades they have made to Birdsong's historic House. Sincere thanks, also, to Birdsong's Executive Director, Kathleen Brady, for her exceptional creativity and tireless efforts in seeing these important undertakings through to their successful completion. Kathleen originally conceived of, and initiated, these significant campaigns and skillfully coordinated the efforts of many individuals while leading these major projects throughout.

Thank you once again to our many kind donors, members, and volunteers, without whom these campaigns would not have been possible. We hope you will visit Birdsong one day soon to enjoy the accomplishments that you so generously supported.

With warmest regards,  
Joe Peresich, President  
Birdsong Board of Directors

**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER**  
**WEB SITE: [www.birdsongnaturecenter.org](http://www.birdsongnaturecenter.org)**  
**EMAIL: [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org)**  
**X: [@BirdsongNatureC](https://twitter.com/BirdsongNatureC)**  
**FACEBOOK: Birdsong Nature Center**  
**YOUTUBE: Birdsong Nature Center**  
**PHONE: 229-377-4408**

## **BIRDSONG'S FALL PLANT SALE**

**Saturday, November 2, 2024**

**9am to 1pm**

**Some featured shade trees....** North Florida and South Georgia trees have been devastated this year by storms. We have lost our soul-nourishing shade. November is the best time of year to plant new trees and shrubs. Here are a few of our best big trees that we'll have at the November 2 plant sale.

The Live Oak is our finest shade tree. It withstands storms better than other trees — witness the 200- to 300-year-old Live Oaks that are still standing in the neighborhoods of Tallahassee hit by the May tornadoes. Live Oaks grow faster than you might think, especially in their first 30 years. If you plant a 3-gallon size Live Oak now you will have shade in 10 years.

Tulip Poplar is our second fastest-growing tree (after Sycamore). It has interesting spatulate leaves and beautiful peach, green, and yellow tulip-shaped flowers which you may never see — they will be high up and hidden in the dense shade-giving foliage of the mature tree.

Nuttall Oak is a medium sized oak tree, but it is fast-growing, and it has the showiest Fall foliage of all our oaks.

-June White  
Plant Sale Chair

We hope you can join us for our Fall Plant Sale on Saturday, November 2 from 9am to 1pm. We will be featuring the above beautiful fast-growing shade trees and many more native trees, shrubs, perennials, and pollinator plants. We will also have a lovely assortment of colorful Wild Azaleas from Koone's Nursery in north Georgia. Fall is a great time to plant!

## **HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE**

**Saturday, November 16, 9am to 1pm**

Join us at Birdsong to celebrate the upcoming holiday season and do some holiday shopping at our newly opened gift shop!

While you are here, please come and see the results of our House and Gardens Improvements Project and take a hayride drawn by the new tractor! Thanks to the generosity of our donors, Birdsong has completed its House and Gardens Improvements Project, and we welcome you to have a look at the work done in and around the House, Garden, Kiosk, and Butterfly Garden. We also invite you to go for a trailer ride through the woods drawn by our new tractor, also funded by our generous donors.

### ***From 9 to 1 pm***

- Visit the newly re-opened Gift Shop. We will be offering new merchandise, including traditional Christmas ornaments and decorations hand-crafted by Birdsong volunteers and staff, as well as nature-related gifts, books, bird feeders, jewelry, field bags, caps, visors, T-shirts, puzzles, children's items, and more.

We also have some exquisite bird houses designed by Buddy Hull, an artist, craftsman, and woodworker from Jacksonville, Florida. These unique works of art were donated by Buddy to help raise funds for Birdsong. In addition, we have prints of an original painting of Birdsong's Barn, by artist Martha Monaghan and several of her unique small paintings on wood from our Barn.

### ***From 10 to noon***

- Hot cider and cookies on the front porch, while they last!

- Tractor-drawn hayrides offered about every half hour. Enjoy a 20-minute ride through the woods and fields of Birdsong on a fall day.

- Children's nature games, crafts, and activities on the front lawn. Led by Birdsong's WILD Ones children's program leaders.

We'll look forward to seeing you there!

## NOW HIRING: A GREETER

Currently, our two Greeters, Lynette Joye Hitt and Sherry Nichols, share greeting duties on the days and hours we are open: Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday 9 to 5, and Sunday 1 to 5. We are interested in hiring another part-time greeter to take over some of the hours worked by current staff and provide more scheduling flexibility. The pay is \$12 per hour.

An ideal candidate would enjoy meeting and working with people; likes an outdoor work setting; is comfortable making simple financial transactions; has experience with or could learn to use Square for processing credit card payments (it is very easy); is physically able to feed the birds, tidy the restrooms, water plants, and manage other light duties. Training will be provided for all aspects of the position.

Please contact Kathleen Brady, Executive Director, at (229)377-4408 for more information and to apply. We will want to learn about your work history and any applicable experience you may have had. Three work and personal references will be required. We look forward to hearing from you!

## WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION, Simplified....

Saturday, December 14, 2024

\$10 adults, \$6 children

This year's musical tribute to the Winter Solstice will be a little different. We are very happy to let you know that our Solstice Sister, Velma Frye, will sing and play for us again, however, we have learned that our dear didgeridoo band, Didja Vu and friends, will not be joining us. Many in their group are not currently playing, so we won't have the didgeridoos or drums this time. We will miss them and hope they will come back next year.

Meanwhile, we will be pleased to gather once again to celebrate the Winter Solstice with Velma and our friends.

*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.

*5:00pm* Velma Frye, with her humble ukelele, will sing her wonderful and inventive nature songs while the sun begins to set.

*5:45pm* Welcome to the Winter Solstice Celebration! We will light the bonfire, accompanied by Velma leading the "Oh, Great Spirit" chant. 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 to the Star Pasture. Dress for the weather, bring a blanket to lie on to observe the stars, and bring a flashlight and your binoculars or scope for viewing.

*Rest of the evening:* Contemplate the Universe with your family and friends, and warm up around the bonfire.

It is our hope that this evening will give you a moment to deeply connect with nature, to enjoy time with people you care about, witness something beautiful, to reflect on what really matters to you as a new year begins, and experience some peace and quiet under the starry 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 driving out if you have questions. You can also check our website and Facebook page. Unfortunately, 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 chairs, flashlight, and binoculars.

Please let us know you are coming. Contact us at: [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org) or call 1(229)377-4408.

**TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE  
For The Holidays!  
Saturday, December 7  
9:30-Noon**

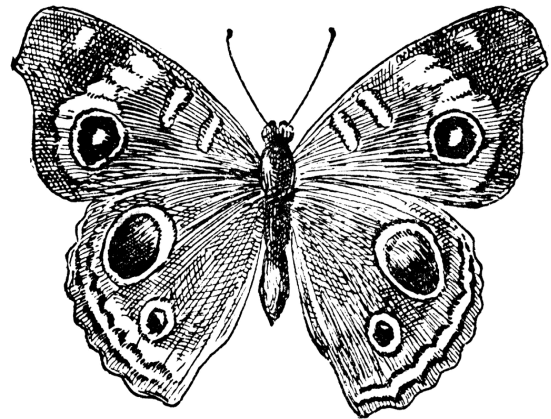
Bring your favorite child to Birdsong and enjoy a morning in the woods with Sandra Sallee and Carolyn Cohen, as you get an early start on preparations for the winter holidays. Give your young person an alternative approach to holiday giving this year and let them collect their own natural materials to make a holiday gift. Each child can take a collecting bag and Sandra and Carolyn will lead the group 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 candleholder or surprise gift item with the materials you have collected.

\$6 Friends, \$9 nonmembers, children half-price. Make **RESERVATIONS, PLEASE** by noon on Friday, December 6th, so we know what materials to provide. Call (229)377-4408 or email [birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org).

**FREE FAMILY DAYS  
First Saturdays: November 2 and December 7**

On first Saturdays admission is free and we 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. This is a nice chance for first-time visitors to enjoy the trails and get to know the property. Please note: this first Saturday in November coincides with our big Fall Plant Sale, so there will be a lot of activity in the parking and sale areas that morning.

**Admission: free**



**BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORKDAYS  
Thursdays, November 7 and December 5  
9 to 11am**

Join us for some of the best gardening weather of the year! The plants that were planted last spring along with the sod path replenishment have thrived thanks to Lynn's diligent watering, so we should have nice nectar and pollen producing blooms next spring and summer. It is easy to remember – the first Thursday of each month with a break in the summer.

During the November session, we plan to discuss some major changes to the garden to make it easier to tend. We would love your input!

In addition, I would like to start a once-a-month Saturday butterfly gardening group since many folks cannot attend during the week. If you are interested in this, please call or text Donna at 850 386-1148 and we will schedule a Saturday session in the New Year and go from there.

Butterfly and pollinator gardening is a fun and rewarding group experience. It reminds me of groups that create quilts together – chatting and visiting and learning together while accomplishing gardening tasks.

- Donna Legare

**THANK YOU!**  
**To our Donors**

We wish to thank the 211 donors who generously responded to the last two Summer Appeals: the 2022 House and Garden Improvements Project and the 2023 New Tractor appeal. To honor these donors, we held an event on October 12<sup>th</sup> to show what has been completed on the House and Garden Project and to let people go on a hayride through the fall woods drawn by the new tractor! Our guests were welcome to walk through the house to see the improvements and gather outdoors on the front lawn to enjoy music by Lance Farlow, have a seafood dinner provided by the Wharf, and enjoy drinks, dessert, and conversation with fellow Birdsong donors. We enjoyed gathering with so many kind friends and supporters to share our communal efforts!

To all our donors, including those who were not able to attend, we want to express our sincere thanks for your support for these last two appeals and for caring about Birdsong's present and future well-being. Because of your generosity we were able to complete the House portion of the project and make great headway on the Garden portion.

Regarding the Garden, we learned an important lesson early on with our first efforts to remove invasives. It became evident that our original request for funding, to have a landscaping crew visit four times to clear out invasives and then replant the House Garden, was highly unrealistic – we have had the crew out eight times so far and are still working on the invasives part. From here out, once more invasives are removed and we can plant new shrubs and flowering plants without concern about using herbicides, we will need to find a way to fund ongoing gardening and maintenance in the main garden surrounding the House. Meanwhile, a lot has been accomplished and we are very pleased with the progress so far.

We count Birdsong very fortunate to have such a committed donor community and we hope our donors are pleased with the results. For those who could not attend, please come out soon to enjoy the realization of the House and Garden Project.

Below please see a listing of the work that has been completed:

**House and Garden Improvements Project work completed:**

**Amount donated toward the project: \$54,613**

**Amount spent to date: \$48,827**

**Work we have paid contractors/electricians/plumbers for and purchases**

*House*

Cutting down the lightning-struck loblolly in the back yard

New roof on the house

New roof on the back porch

Removal of old water heater and installation of new tankless water heater

New ceiling fans and lights installed in the front room, Bird Window, and kitchen; re-wired the bathroom

Track lighting installed in the gift shop

New toilet and faucet hookups installed in bathroom and kitchen

Bathroom cabinet and floor stained and sealed, sanded and sealed the exposed historic wall

Dry wall finishing in the bathroom

Window air conditioning units for meeting room and gift shop

*Garden*

Invasives removal and garden work, 8 visits by Native Nurseries landscape crew

**Donations**

In addition to the work that was paid for by your funding, individuals wanted to support the project with these specific gifts:

Sandblasting and repainting the metal garden furniture – Ken Kuhl

Water efficient toilet – Gunilla Trull

Air conditioner in the Bird Window – Sherry Nichols

Historic attic fan repair – Dana Bryan and Gwendolyn Waldorf

## **THANK YOU! (continued)**

Tree for the lumber for the bathroom floor– Phil Williams

Special lumber from the loblolly and Phil's tree for the bathroom floor and cabinet was milled by Ellery Sedgwick, Birdsong Board member, of Red Hills Lumber Company, Thomasville

### **Volunteer work done by our Construction Crew**

This entire project could not have been completed so beautifully without the many dedicated hours of volunteer work provided by our amazing construction volunteers. These individuals brought their significant talent, skills, knowledge, and creativity to this project.

We offer our sincere thanks to the Construction Crew: Glenn Berman, Mike Brezin, Buddy Holshouser, Steve Kunst, Phil Williams, and Jon Yarbrough.

They donated 900 hours of volunteer time in 2024, much of that to this effort. Here are the many tasks they completed:

#### *Renovation of the house bathroom:*

Stripped out the fiberboard walls, removed tub and sink, repaired the floor beams

Cleaned and sanded the exposed historic wall

Installed drywall and painted the bathroom

Installed new bathroom flooring milled from Phil Williams' tree

Built and installed the new cabinet, made from the lightning-struck loblolly

Trimmed window, walls, door, ceiling, and mirror using Betty's redwood for a connection to the rest of the house

#### *Other repairs/improvements:*

Completely rescreened the back porch

Repaired the porch cupboard

Installed new air conditioners in the front room, gift shop, and Bird Window

Painted the porch

Pressure washed the front of the house

## **We also thank our donors for the new tractor and attachments!**

**Amount donated: \$62,700.**

**Amount spent: \$62,406.**

At the event, Alan took our guests on a tractor-drawn trailer ride through the woods of Birdsong on a beautiful fall day and they got to see the new equipment in action. The new tractor is so quiet you can actually enjoy a conversation on the hayride! Alan has become proficient in operating this new tractor and has told us what a difference it makes to have such a reliable and effective machine. It has had nearly 100 hours of use so far and is due for its first oil change.

*Thank you to our event volunteers!* These special folks, many of whom are donors, helped us to get the gift shop ready, set up for the event, served drinks, led Nature Walks, and helped put everything away: Mike Weed, Joe Peresich, Brenda Coy, Sherry Nichols, Sandra Sallee, Cheryl Burnett, Carole Hayes, Carolyn Cohen, Laurie Jones, and Connie and Ken Klineman. Thank you, June White, for the beautiful bowls of flowers for the tables and the stunning bouquet in the Gift Shop. We could not have done it without you all – thank you!

## OTHER RELATED PROJECTS

· We'd like to let you know about three other projects that were not part of the original House and Garden Improvements Project appeal requests, but are now in beautiful shape for visitors, donors, and staff to enjoy:

**The Butterfly Garden** Our dedicated Butterfly Garden volunteers have worked hard over the past year to make some significant improvements in the Butterfly Garden and the results are beautiful! The team replaced sod on the main trail, cleared and developed new garden beds on the south berm and east triangles, and planted *Gaillardia* and other flowering plants that have been enthusiastically greeted by pollinators! They also installed a new cedar entrance arbor. All this was done above and beyond their usual commitment to weeding, watering, and maintenance of this valuable garden. Thank you, Donna Legare, Ann Morrow, Beth Grant, Connie Lechnar and our other garden volunteers for making this place special for both visitors and butterflies. This is a great time to visit the Garden – the weather is still warm, and the bees and butterflies are a constant presence on the blooming tickseed and other fall flowers.

**The Gift Shop** Pre-Covid, the Gift Shop had been managed beautifully by our dear friends Winnie and Wolf Adolph. We closed during the pandemic but when that was over, both Winnie and Wolf were experiencing health issues and were not able to come back, and we were very busy with the easement and other significant priorities, so the gift shop remained closed. This summer Lynn Brown, our Office Manager, organized the re-opening of the gift shop to coincide with our Donor Appreciation Event on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Led by Lynn's vision for a revitalized shop, a group effort took place, and the space was transformed. Please stop by to see it on your next visit to Bird-song. It is beautiful and interesting and stocked with new merchandise, including some extraordinary bird houses donated by artist and wood craftsman Buddy Hull, plus much more. We think you will be pleased!

The shop will be open during regular business hours, except on November 2, Plant Sale day. Please see page 2 for a description of our Holiday Open House on November 16<sup>th</sup>, which will provide opportunities for holiday shopping and seeing the new House improvements. The shop will feature some new stock and traditional holiday ornaments hand-crafted by our staff and volunteers.

**The Registration Kiosk** This summer was extremely hot, hotter than usual, and our Greeters were uncomfortable working in the kiosk with the intense heat radiating through the fiberglass roof. Our Construction Crew solved this problem by installing a new outdoor ceiling fan and a silver heat-reflecting tarp on the roof. It made a huge difference, and our Greeters are now comfortable even on a hot day!

### LAND MANAGEMENT WORKDAYS

**Thursdays: November 7 and 21, December 5 and 19  
9am to noon**

It was a long, hot, stormy summer, topped off with a close call from Hurricane Helene. Although we are currently in a drought, the rainy summer resulted in lots of growth, and between that and the trees and branches downed by Helene, we have plenty of land management challenges. We'd really appreciate your help with clearing fallen trees and trimming overhanging limbs and brush that is encroaching on the trails. We also have our ongoing issues, such as invasive plant removal and cutting down the thriving sweetgum and pine saplings that are showing up everywhere. We also want to do as much preparation as we can for the upcoming burn season.

If you enjoy working outdoors with good-natured companions, please join us on these workdays. Alan Parker, our land and site expert, will lead these efforts and be joined by members of our volunteer burn crew. They would be pleased to have your help. These projects are great learning experiences and will help get things in shape for burning. Your contribution will be much appreciated.

Be prepared for the weather and bring work gloves. If you have a favorite pair of loppers, a saw, or other tools, you are welcome to bring them, but we do have tools on site. There will be water and a snack on the truck; bring a sandwich if you want to have lunch together and we'll provide drinks and dessert.

If the weather turns out to be good for burning, we will pivot to a burn day and that means meeting at a different time of day, so please do let us know if you are planning to attend so you can be informed of any potential time change. It will also help us prepare for lunch in case you want to join us. Please call us at 229-377-4408 or email [kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter.org](mailto:kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter.org).

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES

### October 14, 2024

**Weather** Today is a beautiful fall day. Sunny, breezy, a cloudless blue sky, and cool. Ever since the last newsletter, however, we've been on a roller-coaster, weatherwise. We had Hurricane Debby in August, followed by multiple big storms with lots of rain and extended periods of extreme heat. Then Hurricane Helene came along, with a terrifying track prediction, straight at us, and then it came ashore to the east. Somehow our area escaped the worst of the impact, and it caused no damage to the buildings at Birdsong, but we did lose a lot of old trees; some were beloved old landmarks which we deeply miss. As hard as that has been, given what has happened elsewhere we have no complaints. Ever since, we've benefited in many ways from an extended cold front which in part kept Hurricane Milton on a track to the south. For the past three weeks, this front has provided the beautiful fall weather we are experiencing today: cool, with a sunny clear sky, and no rain. Even though it is lovely weather now, perfect for going out in the woods to enjoy the fall scenery, we are starting to see a few signs of drought, so a good rain would not go unappreciated. We recorded 8.54 inches of rain in the month of September, including 4.95 after Hurricane Helene on September 27, but since then we have had no rain at all in the month of October, a true October drought.

**Fall** The wildflowers got started a little later than expected this fall but are now blooming effusively all over the property. The *Liatris* is having a phenomenal year and can be found in beautiful stands scattered all over the property, especially in the fields and other grassy areas where the trees are widely spaced. What a stunning wildflower it is. "Blazing Star", a single wand of purple flowers along the stem, slightly curved and waving in the breeze. We are of course enjoying the broad expanses of vibrant goldenrod mixed with Narrow-leaved Sunflower and *Pittyopsis* with lavender Mistflower mixed in. The tall native grasses with their silver, bronze and golden seedheads are emerging now, too, very impressive, backlit and glowing in the sun.

The Gin House Field looks a little different this year. It is full of beautiful wildflowers, but we do not have a massive bloom of *Agalinis* like we have had the past two years. This beautiful pink wildflower is scattered across the field in patches among other gorgeous flowers like Daisy Fleabane, *Liatris*, *Pittyopsis*, and Goldenrod. We do not know why they are so different, but there are just fewer

*Agalinis* plants this year. It is still well worth going on a leisurely walk through the field; the vibrant wildflowers and grasses are waist-to-head-high along the trails, and stretch out to the trees on the horizon. It is a wonderful sight. They are all covered with happy busy pollinators too, another plus!

With a few cold nights in recent weeks, we are seeing some leaf color out in the woods. One of the most noticeable trees, with leaves turning russet and maroon and deep purple, is our Sweet Gum. We are often annoyed by its prolific emergence where we do not want it, but this time of year we get very ambivalent – it is beautiful!

It is a good berry and fruit season this fall. The Yaupon Holly is really putting on a show, as are Magnolia, Cherry Laurel, Wax Myrtle, and Crabapple. The birds and wildlife are feasting!

**Land Management** Alan had a long hot summer of mowing trails that relentlessly grew back within two weeks, along with cleaning up fallen trees, debris, and branches from the frequent storms and two hurricanes. We are fortunate to have Mike Carter close by, so when the big storms come through Alan has a work partner to help manage the really tough jobs of moving huge trees off the trails and so on. I think we've seen more of Mike this year than any in memory. At least now the growing season is finally winding down so mowing is almost over for the year.

We will now be turning our attention to getting ready for burning in the coming months, so Alan will be harrowing and trimming fire lanes, identifying new snags to protect, and getting the equipment prepared. We have a big season ahead of us, now that we have a wonderful working tractor we can rely on while burning!

**Praying Mantis** In the last newsletter we told you about a male praying mantis we had observed on a Daisy Fleabane stem near the Barn. As promised, we continued to check on him for the next few days before we closed for break. He was not there the following three or four days, so we must assume that he made his final molt into his adult stage where his newly developed wings became functional and he was able to fly away. We really enjoyed that opportunity to watch a single insect over a period of three or so weeks; he was fascinating. We hope he flew off and found a mate and is leading a long and enjoyable praying mantis life.

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, I went to load something into my car and noticed a praying mantis on the silver passenger-side mirror cowling. I got very excited because it had the exact same patterning as the male we'd been watching, but this one was a bit larger



and had a heavy, shapely abdomen – a female! She displayed the same interest and curiosity as her male counterpart, turning her small triangular face to look at me, and watching my every move. She did not appear to be fearful, and didn't fly away although she did have wings. After a few moments into our encounter, she began a rhythmic little dance, with her spikey arms held down and slightly open so you could see all the subtle gray-brown patterning and interlocking spikes. She kept her attention on me during this display (mantis eyes are mesmerizing) and she tapped the tip of her abdomen on the silver as she moved. The motions were all very subtle; I'm not sure what was being conveyed but it was riveting.

I thought it would be in her best interest to move her off of the car, as I had to leave shortly, so I reached my hand out to see if she would climb on, which she wasn't really interested in doing, so I picked her up very carefully and placed her on the nearby split rail fence that is covered with vines and left her there. She didn't move, but turned her face to watch me walk away. A little later she was gone. I had to wonder if she and the male we knew had crossed paths and had perhaps mated. If we ever see another praying mantis, we'll be thinking of these two. To us they will become the mythical origin mantises for all future generations of mantises seen at Birdsong from now on.

***The Bird Window*** The Bird Window – the actual window - made it through the two recent hurricanes unscathed, thanks in large measure to Alan and Mike coming in on their days off to get it boarded up. The window is plate glass that was installed in 1958, so any threat of severe weather coming from the west always makes us uneasy. We breathe a sigh of relief when we come in to assess the aftermath of a storm and see the window intact. Thank you, Alan and Mike.

The change of seasons seemed to be taking its time, but now, after Helene, it really feels and looks like fall. The weather is substantially cooler, especially at night and in the early mornings, which we are all savoring and enjoying immensely. We are seeing this shift in bird presence and activity at the Bird Window, too. This is a rich time of year for wild food for birds and other wildlife – as mentioned above, there is an abundance of ripening berries, seeds, and fruit available out on the property. The birds who needed the supplemental seed at the Bird Window all summer to feed themselves and their offspring are now out taking full advantage of the bounty in the wild. So we are seeing less activity at the Window and the amount of food being eaten has dropped off dramatically in the past few weeks. By the end of the day, there is still a harrow disc nearly full of corn, and in spite of the squirrels and the bot-

tomless-pit teenage raccoon, there is plenty of black oil sunflower seed left in the trough.

This is the time of year when, after a long summer of seeing a fairly predictable, but by no means boring, variety of summer residents, a visitor to the Window can be delighted by some completely unexpected birds on any given day. For example, last Tuesday afternoon, October 9<sup>th</sup> after a long day of event preparation, Lynn and I took a few minutes to sit at the Window with our binoculars and within a short period of time listed 16 different birds including a first year male Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a first year male Bay-breasted Warbler, a Tennessee Warbler, and a season's first immature male Yellow-bellied Sapsucker! Three Gray Catbirds were playing in the water and mister; one behaved just like a flycatcher, hovering and dipping. The following day, just walking by and taking a quick glance, there were two Ovenbirds stalking around the camellia with their odd little gait and beautiful orange striped heads. Here is the list we saw on the 16th: many Cardinals, Bay-breasted Warbler (fall male and fall female), 3 Gray Catbirds, 2 Summer Tanagers, Blue Jays, Mockingbird, Tufted Titmouse, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Tennessee Warbler, Ovenbird, Black-and-white Warbler, Redstart (immature male), Carolina Wren. Other recent sightings: Hooded Warbler, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, and the Catbirds, Grosbeak, and Bay-breasted have been seen again!

The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have not been seen at the Window since the 8<sup>th</sup> of October. Lynn is keeping the feeders filled for any stragglers in need of a meal on their way south. Typically, they leave around the week of October 13 to 20, so this is a little early. We were worried about the effects of Hurricane Helene and now Milton on the many thousands of birds that migrate this time of year. We hope that the cold front that has been actively steering the weather here in the last few weeks has been an advantage in some way to our migrants. We can vouch for the safe arrival of many lovely species and encourage you to come out and be surprised by a wonderful sighting sometime soon!

It is a busy, exuberant, colorful time of year to visit Birdsong. Going for a walk among all these intensely beautiful flowers displaying their most attractive selves to their ardent pollinators is an uplifting and joyful experience. You really get to see the personalities of our normally subtle green plants burst forth into their extroverted selves in the fall. Please take the opportunity to enjoy them at their most vivacious!

-KDB

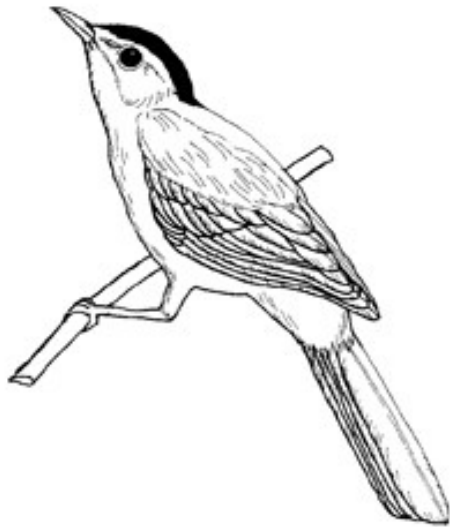
**NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG**

***Cairo***

Amber Homeyer

***Moultrie***

Morgan & Amanda Castellow



**BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:**

***In memory of my friend Wolfgang Adolph:***  
Alec Hargreaves

***In memory of Wolfgang Adolph:***  
William Cloonan

***Special Financial Gifts:***

Virginia Harmon  
Cheryl Burnett & Roland White  
Carole Hayes  
Dana Bryan & Gwendolyn Waldorf  
Donna Gateley  
William Dahlem  
Lance Farlow  
Sherry Nichols  
Gunilla Trull

**BIRDSONG'S CORPORATE SPONSORS**

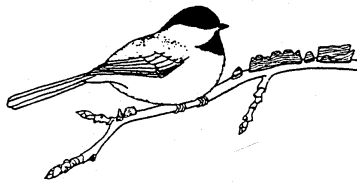
Native Nurseries  
Trillium Gardens Nursery  
Import Authority  
Seminole Alterations  
Chelsea Salon & Spa  
TNB Financial Services  
Target Print and Mail  
Armstrong Tree Service  
Woodleaf Senior Care  
Cowhey & Ward, LLC  
Loblolly Rise  
Blue Bear Farm & Cattle Co. LLC  
Magnolia Chapter, Florida Native Plant Society  
Wiregrass Electric, Inc.

**Birdsong Nature Center  
Board of Directors  
2023-2024**

**President** Joe Peresich  
**Treasurer** Bill Preston  
**Secretary** Margaret Tyson

**Directors**

Jim Antista Ellery Sedgwick  
Scott Ball



# *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: \_\_\_\_\_

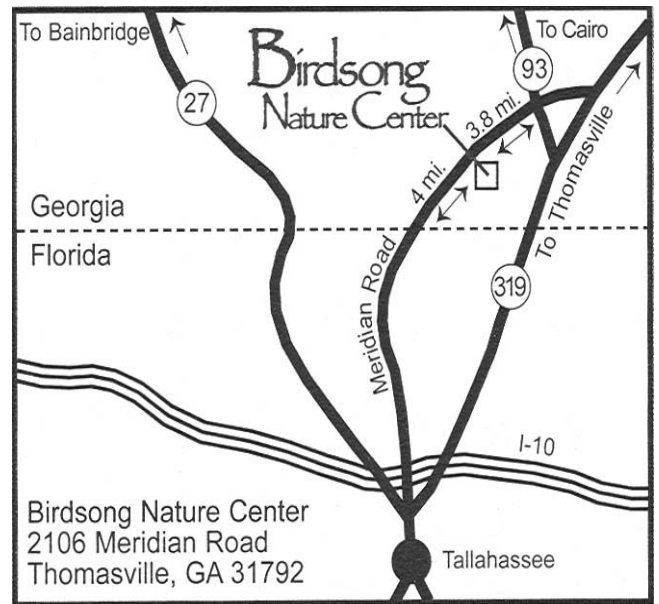
**I would like to join the Friends of Birdsong in the following category:**

- |                          |                            |               |  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Individual Friend          | \$30          | Bird Window and Nature Trails free during open hours.<br>Two free one-time guest passes.<br>Member discount on scheduled programs.<br>10% discount on items at the Chickadee Corner Gift Shop.<br>Bimonthly newsletter. Reciprocal general admission at participating nature centers nationwide (call for list). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Family/Friends             | \$45          | All of the above benefits for each member of the immediate household. Four free one-time guest passes.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Friends of the Cardinal    | \$60          | Five free one-time guest passes in addition to above.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Friends of the Chickadee   | \$100         | Six free one-time guest passes in addition to above.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 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.<br>Call for more information.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Friends of the Hummingbird | \$250         | Hummingbird feeder in addition to above.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Friends of the Bluebird    | \$500         | Bluebird nesting box in addition to above.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 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"/> Public Relations                               | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial/legal guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on Board of Directors                    | _____                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising             | <input type="checkbox"/> (please submit resume)                         | _____                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greeter                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching (birds, nature walks,<br>stars, etc.) | _____                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Shop Assistant      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                                    | _____                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Management          |   |                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Development      |   |                                |

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.



**DIRECTIONS:**

From Tallahassee: Meridian Road north, 4 miles past FL/ GA border 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*