

Birdsong Nature Center

May-June, 2025

TRAILS AND BIRD WINDOW OPEN WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS Hours: Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays 9 to 5 Sundays 1 to 5

May

Thur.	May	1	Butterfly Garden Workday
Sat.	May	3	Free Family Day
Wed.	May	7	Land Management Workday
Sat.	May	10	Spring Migration Bird Walk
Sun.	May	11	Mother's Day, Free Admission
Sat.	May	17	Take a Child Outside and Get Wet
	•		and Muddy!
Wed.	May	21	Land Management Workday

June

Wed. Thur. Sat.	June June June	4 5 7	Land Management Workday Butterfly Garden Workday Free Family Day
Wed.	June	18	Land Management Workday
Sat.	June	21	Ephemeral Wetland Exploration

BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER

WEB SITE: www.birdsongnaturecenter.org EMAIL: birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org FACEBOOK: Birdsong Nature Center YOUTUBE: Birdsong Nature Center PHONE: 229-377-4408



Please, no pets on Nature Center property.

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

ONCE AGAIN WE THANK OUR PLANT SALE WORKERS! June White, Plant Sale Chair

We thank the "stars" of the sale day, those helpful people in the bright green aprons who share their vast horticultural knowledge with our shoppers so that they choose just the right plant for the right place.

We thank the people who toil all year in their home gardens, digging and dividing, taking cuttings, potting up and growing plants for the sale. This year they had to protect those tender plants from snow, of all things, in Florida!

We thank Dan Miller, our azalea man, who drives hundreds of miles several times a year hauling plants down here from Ernest Koone's nursery in Pine Mountain. In our first years we had a hard time selling Wild Azaleas. Many of them don't have leaves or blooms at sale time. But this year was a first: we sold every single Wild Azalea we had. This is largely due to the education Dan has provided over the years about the beauty and usefulness of these plants.

We also thank all our cashiers, talliers, parking lot workers, and those who help with our raffle, greeting, and membership tables and at the gift shop. We thank everyone who comes to the Thursday workdays to set up the entire sale area and then help take it down at the end of each sale.

(over)

Thanks to those who are STILL at work, putting up and organizing equipment so that it will be ready and easy to manage for the next sale. One of our most indispensable workers shows up faithfully every year and says "I don't know anything about plants. Just tell me what to do."

And of course thank you to our plant shoppers. You show your confidence in us and your support of Birdsong by buying these plants. The dry month of May is coming. Get out the hose!

THANK YOU, PLANT SALE VOLUNTEERS!

These spring plant sales, with their extraordinary results, happen because Birdsong has a remarkable group of volunteers who contribute their time, talent, energy, expertise, and good cheer to the cause. We offer our sincere thanks to everyone who has helped us this spring:

Carole Hayes
Dan Miller
Alan Parker
Mark Phillips
Mike Weed
Sue McFadden
Barbara Jinright Collins
Ben White
Rick Cantrell
Jonae Favors
Melissa Rigsby
Buddy Holshouser
Connie Clineman
Carla Peterson
Sandra Sallee

Yvonne Stinson
Sherry Nichols
Julia Sawyer
Brenda Coy
Kristine Dougherty
Stanton Beazley
Gunilla Trull
Lisa Reeves
Sharman Franklin
Karen Berkley
Albert Harrison
Lynette Hitt
Stephen Strickland
Phil Williams

Ute Schorn
Scott Ball
Jan Bordelon
Faith Hazelip
Lynn Brown
Sharon Kindred
Carolyn Cohen
Gail Sloane
Betty Esco
Marilena Panogio

Marilena Panogiotou Joe Peresich Ken Clineman Daphne Asbell Cheryl Burnett

We want to offer a special thank you to June White, our Plant Sale creative director, visionary, and expert botanist. June has deep knowledge and appreciation for every wonderful plant we offer, she grows and procures them, and she is the person who designs and writes the beautiful and informative plant signs made for each variety. She creates the interesting sale layouts and is present at each sale to answer questions and advise on growing. June wants to make sure that every customer gets just the right plants and all the information they need to take their new plants home and help them thrive so they can love and enjoy their plants as much as June does. She keeps our volunteer team well-directed and happy, and we all appreciate her leadership.

Thank you, June!

We also want to thank Faith Hazelip who donated the beautiful "Birds of a Feather" quilt, which we raffled off on the last Plant Sale day. Faith's gift brought in \$575 for Birdsong and was much appreciated by the winner – the songbird theme of the quilt embodied a loving connection the winner had with her mother. Thank you, Faith.

FREE FAMILY DAYS First Saturdays: May 3 and June 7

On first Saturdays of the month 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 getting to know the property, hike the trails, and visit the Bird Window, Gift Shop, and Butterfly Garden.

Admission: free

SPRING MIGRATION BIRD WALK

Saturday, May 10th 8am to 11:30am

Spring migration may be winding down, but our summer nesting migrants have arrived! We can look for Summer Tanagers, Orchard Orioles, Indigo Buntings, Blue Grosbeaks and others. We can also observe Eastern Bluebirds as they feed their newly hatched young and continue nesting. Please bring binoculars if you have them and be prepared for hiking through the fields and woods around Birdsong. Wear muted colors.

Please save your space and RSVP by emailing <u>birdsong@birdsongnaturecenter.org</u> or calling 1(229)377-4408 by noon on Friday, May 9th. The maximum number of participants for these walks is capped at 15. The walk will be led by Janell Cleveland, an avid birder who is very good at helping others learn to identify birds and enjoy the art of birding.

\$8 members, \$10 non-members. **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.**

VISIT BIRDSONG ON MOTHER'S DAY Free admission! \$5-off membership Sunday, May 11, 1 to 5pm

All are welcome to visit Birdsong at no charge on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 11. This is a beautiful time of year to celebrate our mothers with an afternoon walk in a natural setting. The spring migrant and summer resident songbirds have arrived, the weather is still cool, and the landscape is green and inviting. You can take your mother on a pleasant walk in the woods, visit the restful Listening Place, and spend time at the Bird Window enjoying the nesting birds that are feeding and gathering food for their babies. You may want to visit the Gift Shop (or come in advance of the special day) to purchase a gift to honor your mother, grandmother or mother of your children. We have a very nice selection of nature-related jewelry, artwork, bird houses, field bags, Birdsong caps, aprons, and T-shirts and other special gifts. We will also offer a \$5-off membership opportunity. Happy Mother's Day!

TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE AND GET WET AND MUDDY! Saturday, May 17 9:30AM - Noon

Celebrate summer at Birdsong with your favorite child or children. Leaders Sandra Sallee, Carolyn Cohen, 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, May 16th.

\$8 Friends, \$10 nonmembers, children halfprice. Includes a handout and resource list for yearround outdoor activities with children.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORKDAYS Thursdays, May 1 and June 5 9:00AM to Noon

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

Please feel welcome to join this accomplished and active crew of volunteers to tend our beautiful Butterfly Garden! We may also do some invasives removal at the main garden around the house. Your involvement would be very welcome. 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.



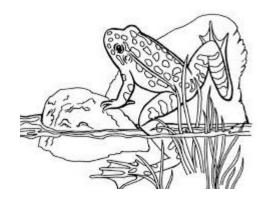
EPHEMERAL WETLAND EXPLORATION Saturday, June 21st 9 to 11:30AM

Join ecologist Rebecca Means of Conservation Pathways to explore Birdsong's ephemeral wetlands! Rebecca has over 20 years of experience studying ephemeral wetlands in our area and is also engaged in providing area college and high school students with field research, science communication, and networking experiences - we will get to meet some of her interns too!

After a brief introduction we will ride out on the trailer to several Birdsong wetlands to experience them first-hand. We will be collecting amphibian and plant data for an on-going research project which will involve learning amphibian larvae identification and sampling techniques as well as general natural history of wetland plants, reptiles, invertebrates and much more. This program is geared towards citizens of all ages, including young ones, but there will be wading involved, and because we get excited about what we are discovering, the program might run long. All equipment will be provided. Plan to get wet!

RESERVATIONS, PLEASE. There is a class limit of 12 people. Please contact us by noon on Friday, June 20th to reserve your space. Dress for the weather, including sun protection, and wear shoes you don't mind getting wet; bring water and a snack. *No insect repellent please as it is toxic to amphibians too.* You are welcome to bring a picnic and have lunch after the program; you may want to bring dry clothes and shoes for the ride home.

\$15 adults, \$18 non-members, children half-price.



LAND MANAGEMENT WORKDAYS Wednesdays: May 7 and 21; June 4 and 18 9am to noon

This time of year, we are focusing primarily on burning, which we schedule by email with our crew. The above scheduled workdays may involve burn preparation efforts such as raking around trees, cutting down small pine and sweetgum trees, or removing invasives. Please let us know in advance if you want to join us.

Please be prepared for the weather and bring work gloves and any favorite tools. There will be water and a snack on the truck; bring a sandwich if you want to have lunch together afterwards and Birdsong will provide drinks and dessert.

Please note: If the weather turns out to be good for burning on a scheduled workday, we will pivot to doing a burn, and that means meeting at a different time of day, so do let us know in advance if you are planning to attend so you can be informed of any potential time and activity change. It will also help us prepare for lunch in case you want to join us for the workday. Please contact us at 229-377-4408 or email kathleen@birdsongnaturecenter.org. Thank you!

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT NOTES April 13, 2025

Weather It has been an absolutely beautiful spring. Ever since the warm spell after the ice storm, the weather has been mostly pleasant and cool, except for one week of extremely hot temperatures, and we've been enjoying the rapid green surge as the trees leaf out. There has been a pattern of frequent rains and high winds, which has made planning our burning problematic. Until this week, it was raining almost every four to five days, and for several weeks in a row, on each weekend. The vegetation has responded joyfully, and the landscape is thriving: every shade of green is visible as the springtime swell progresses rapidly each day. It is an uplifting time of year - wonderful and refreshing to be out in the woods.

Wild Azaleas The Wild Azaleas are just now beginning to wrap up a phenomenal bloom. The Rhododendron canescens have put on an impressive display throughout our wooded drains and along the north side of Big Bay Swamp. This fragrant pale pink azalea started blooming early – you may have seen the big bank of shrubs flowering in the Butterfly Garden for several weeks. Wherever you find them, there will be butterflies and bees fluttering among the flowers, clearly attracted by the scent and nectar.

The Wild Azalea Garden planted by Dan Miller on the trail leading south of the Barn to Big Bay drain is still blooming and these shrubs too are covered with Pipevine Swallowtails, honeybees, bumblebees, and other pollinating insects. These shrubs are the *R. austrinum* species, grown from seed by Dan. The flowers are different shades of orange and peach, some a deep salmon, some a pale gold. You will find them irresistible – when you walk by you can't help but get up close and enjoy the lovely scents and colors and you'll understand why the butterflies and bees are so ecstatic.

Land Management We went into the winter burn season with high hopes, excited to be working with the new tractor, and ready to go. Next thing we know, it is raining almost every four days. For an effective burn we need to allow a good three or more days of drying time after a rain, plus the day before a rain with a front coming through often means high, gusty winds often coming from variable directions. With these conditions we haven't been able to burn as frequently as we originally planned. That said, we've managed to get some good burning done and are very pleased with the results.

Because of the variety of trees and vegetation in many Birdsong locations, it has been challenging to find a day with low enough humidity and sufficient drying time since the last rain to enable a clean burn. In this oldfield environment, we have a lot of hardwoods mixed in with our pines, which means a leafy mix on the ground – not always easy to burn through, especially if slightly damp. The leaves hold moisture much longer than a layer of just pine needles. We were very pleased to get a good fire into the northwest corner, north of the Farm Pond. This area had not been burned for a while and needed a nice hot burn, which it got. We've also burned Linton's Corner, the north shoreline of Big Bay Swamp around the Listening Place, and recently the House Pasture, the Squirrel Woods, and the two sections adjacent to the Wild Azalea Garden. Yesterday we got a good hot burn into the Lewis Field and the Gin House Field. That one was a very impressive burn. Our crew did a great job!

With the arrival of an entire two weeks with no rain, we have several more burns planned, and the weather, for now anyway, looks good – we have the conditions we want. Another issue we've been having this season involves the weather predictions – they have been highly variable across sites and will often change dramatically in a short period of time, making it challenging to plan ahead.

Fortunately, we have a wonderful burn crew of experienced volunteers as well as some new recruits, and we have been able to get a lot done even with the unusual weather. We are really looking forward to this week, and hopefully a few more weeks with good burning conditions. Thank you to our excellent crew: Russ Barrett, Scott Ball, Karen Berkley, Sandra Sallee, Carolyn Cohen, Mike Weed, Douglas Gillis, Kathy Barnett, Kris Travis, Bill Carroll, Stanton Beazley, Dylan Ryals-Hamilton, John Barksdale, Paul Parker, and Sherry Nichols. Special thanks to Alan Parker, our tractor/water tank operator and land management person who harrows and preps the firelanes and gets the equipment ready for burning and generally takes excellent care of the property. We are grateful to have such an accomplished team who make the hard work fun. Thank you!

Purple Martins Last year's Purple Martin nesting season ended abruptly when our entire colony, three pairs of adults feeding at least three babies each per gourd, were all taken overnight by a huge white oak snake. It was extremely upsetting. We'd been concerned about the low numbers to begin with – only three nesting pairs, which was lower than the six we had the year before – and were hoping for a successful hatch of nine to twelve babies. It was devastating to come back in the morning, after seeing the birds feeding their young and making their usual cheerful clamor the day before, to a completely silent martin

pole – not a martin in sight. A large snake was the only possibility, and apparently, it was able to climbed up over the big predator guard at night when they were all sleeping.

This season, we did not know what to expect. A few Martins did show up around the middle of February and did some fly-bys and perched a while, but that was it. No activity, no birds. The colony usually gets moved in and start claiming gourds and building nests and are well on their way by early March. About three weeks ago, a couple of Martins came by and spent a few minutes on the crossbars, calling and circling, and then left. This happened again a few more times until last week, when a pair came by making a lot of noise, and acting extremely interested – checking out each gourd and calling from the crossbars. They are now coming by several times a day, curious and busy, and yesterday there were two pairs doing the flying over and visiting different gourds, the females sitting looking out of the doors. We are happy to see them - it is always uplifting to hear them coming and then get to observe the antics and hear the chortling calls. We are not sure what this will all add up to – and are actually hoping they won't nest with us now but find the location interesting and come back next year. It is so late in the season, if they start nesting now, it will be incredibly hot when they are trying to fledge babies. We have been through that stressful stage many times and it is grueling for all concerned. We are enjoying their daily visits very much but hope that this is just reconnaissance for next year. We'll let you know how it turns out.

Bats In the last newsletter, mid-February, we told you that the bats had not been seen since December, and we were afraid that they might not be coming back. The day after we sent the newsletter out, February 17th, I checked once more to see if they were really gone, and there was a bat! This appeared to be the little male, all by himself. I started checking every day and three days later, there he was again, accompanied by the female! The difference this time was their position – she was now on the left side, he on the right, both facing the same direction, just a few inches apart. We think it is the same two bats based on their behavior and demeanor. He always hangs with his wings folded, she always has one or more spread out, holding on to the ceiling with her tiny claws. We got to see them together on two more occasions, then after that she was on her own. Typically, she was sound asleep and still, but on March 1st, she started an elaborate grooming routine, hanging on with one foot while rapidly scratching at her torso and neck with the other, like any dog or cat, then cleaning it in her mouth. She also was doing some sort of silent chattering, lots of mouth and tongue activity. She then held on with both back feet and groomed her belly between her wings, reaching low, and then tossed a dark pellet off to the side and kept grooming. One thing

that we've noticed all along is how disheveled the fur on their backs looks. They must have a very pale under coat; with their fur all messy, there are often white patches showing. When the top fur is smoothed down, it is brownish-gray. Their muzzles and ears are pink, and the skin on the wings is black.

She was seen again on March 4th, 20th, and 22nd and we now think she has moved on to join with other females who will raise their babies over the summer.

It is hard to describe how charming and endearing these bats are. We were so happy to see them again. They are also so very tiny and vulnerable. We wish them a good year and hope they'll be back again in December.

Bird Window Visitors have been enjoying the springtime activity at the Bird Window and gardens lately. The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrived the second week in March and can be seen frequently now at the feeders and have been spotted on the Wild Azaleas in the Butterfly Garden. Flocks of Cedar Waxwings arrived in mid-March and have been devouring the red mulberries, ripe or not. Northern Parulas have returned - hard to see in the treetops, but it is easy to recognize that pretty little call. Other species seen at the Bird Window include American Robin, American Goldfinch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, House Finch, Swainson's Thrush, Red-winged Blackbird, and Downy Woodpecker. Our regulars, year-round residents, have been busy at the Window, too: Eastern Towhee, Cardinal, Carolina Chickadee, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Mockingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Crow, Brown Thrasher, Pine Warbler.

Some of our favorite winter residents this year are still with us, including the White-throated Sparrows – we still have two white-striped morphs and one tanstriped morph - and the Gray Catbirds, who can be found on the red mulberries lately. Lynn's Hermit Thrush has left – he would wait in the morning for Lynn to arrive and she would toss him suet crumbs. The ones we will also really miss are the Ovenbirds. They've been at the Bird Window since December, and on April 6, the day before they disappeared, were seen under the jasmine shrubs by the kiosk and in front of my office, as if saying their goodbyes. We hope they'll return next year – their behavior is unusual for a warbler, and they've been very entertaining and interesting to observe.

We can't promise you'll see any bats, but Birdsong is full of singing, nesting songbirds this spring – you can't help but see a lot of bird activity this time of year. Please do come out and enjoy this spring weather while it lasts; this is a great time to learn your songbird calls!

NEW FRIENDS OF BIRDSONG

Tallahassee

Candace Beauvais

Lauren Smith

Lori and Steve Wolfe

Randy and Karen Murrell

Carol Strom

Jeff and Jenn Nabors

Caroline Collins

Geoffrey Brown

Stuart Faison

Martha Billings & Paul Deitchman

Carol Rippee

Roberta and David Mann

Sarah Valentine

Edie Goldie

Luic Goldic

Alan Herring

Cynthia Woodyard

Thomasville

Christopher and Angela Linton

Debbie Beeson

Kathy Hardeman

Cindy Inman

Jackie Leatherman

Arthur and Marlesa Wigfall

Donalsonville, GA

McFadden Nature Center

Pavo, GA

Crystal Butler

Leesburg, GA

Kathryn and Clayton Mims

Moultrie, GA

Cindy Russell

Jessi Bass

Bainbridge, GA

Faceville Nurseries

Cairo, GA

Maribel Greene

Havana, FL

Angie and Olivia Standley

Mary M. Smith

Monticello, FL

Thalla Chevillot

Rick Fernandez

BIRDSONG NATURE CENTER WISHES TO THANK:

From a dear friend in memory of Gerry Murphy: John Heise

In memory of Wolfgang:

Winnifred Adolph

In memory of Dr. Nancy Smith Fichter:

Barbara Cooper

In memory of Virginia Craig:

Leigh Brooks

Special financial gifts:

Briarcliff Garden Club

Donna Legare and Jody Walthall

Tom Strazulla

Cheryl Burnett and Roland White

Carl Tomlinson

BIRDSONG'S CORPORATE SPONSORS

Faceville Nurseries
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.

Homestead Imprinted Sportswear

Birdsong Nature Center Board of Directors 2024-2025

President Treasurer Joe Peresich Bill Preston

Directors

Jim Antista Scott Ball Ellery Sedgwick

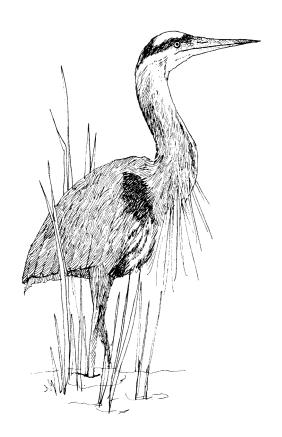


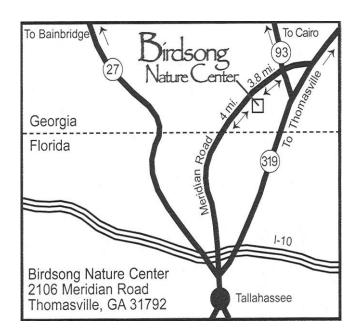
Birdsong Nature Center MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____

☐ New	□Renewal		☐ Cree	dit Card □Check □Cash □Payp	al
Credit Card	Account #				
Exp. Date	/ Amount Auth	norized \$		_ Authorization No	
Cardholder S	Signature				
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Address	1		City S	tate Zip	
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Place of Em	ployment:		Job Title:		
Training, ex	perience, interests:				
How did you	i learn about Birdsong? F	rom a men	nber of Birdsong, the news med	lia, word of mouth, our newsletter, etc	?
ricase de sp	ecilic				
		irdsong in	the following category:		
Individ	ual Friend	\$30	Bird Window and Nature Trail		
			Two free one-time guest passe		
			Member discount on schedule		
			10% discount on items at the 0		
			Bimonthly newsletter. Reciproparticipating nature centers na	ocal general admission at tionwide (call for list).	
☐ Family/	Friends	\$45	All of the above benefits for ea household. Four free one-time		
☐ Friends	of the Cardinal	\$60	Five free one-time guest passe		
	of the Chickadee	\$100	Six free one-time guest passes		
		00-\$1,000	One free one-time guest passes	For each \$10 of membership	
Dusines	is corporate Triend \$10	νο ψ1,000	One free one-time guest pass for each \$10 of membership (ie., 25 passes for \$250) and recognition in newsletter.		
			Call for more information.	beognition in newsietter.	
Friends	of the Hummingbird	\$250	Hummingbird feeder in addition	on to above	
	of the Bluebird	\$500	Bluebird nesting box in addition		
	ng Naturalist	\$1,000		th Executive Director and/or Board C	hair
Biruson	.g i tataranst	Ψ1,000	for up to 6 people. Call for mo	ore information.	11411
I do not	wish to receive any (abo	ve) benefit	s with my membership and wo	uld like the whole amount tax deducti	ble.
I would	like to support Birdson	g by volu	nteering to help as follows:		
☐ Bird W	indow Instructor	P ₁	ıblic Relations		
	ial/legal guidance		erve on Board of Directors		
Fund ra			lease submit resume)		
Greeter		L T	eaching (birds, nature walks,		
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Land N	lanagement		ther		
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2				=	

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".

Address Service Requested

Birdsong Nature Center 2106 Meridian Road Thomasville, GA 31792