

# Apalachee Audubon

The Newsletter Of The Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

Vol. 102, no. 8

www.apalachee.org

May, 2002

## President's Column

### April is Audubon Month

April is the month of John James Audubon's birth and one of Apalachee Audubon's busiest months. In addition to our regular monthly program and field-trips our chapter participated in the Welcome Back Song Birds and Wakulla Wildlife Festival at Wakulla Springs State Park on April 27<sup>th</sup> and we conducted the Apalachee Audubon Birdathon. Birdathon is Audubon's most important annual fundraising event and the world's largest bird-watching competition. Every year, thousands of people nationwide join Audubon to count birds, have fun, and raise vital funds for Audubon's mission of environmental conservation, education, and advocacy. Here's how a Birdathon works: participants sign up pledges from supporters, go out at a specified time and count species of birds, and then collect pledges based on the number of species they see.

Last year's Apalachee Birdathon helped raise over \$6,000 in support of Audubon's mission to *conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on*

*birds and other wildlife.* We hope you'll join the fun with thousands of others in our community who helped make Birdathon a success by sending in your Birdathon gift in the postage paid envelope enclosed in this newsletter.

Good birding, *Larry*

### Devoted to Hummingbird Banding

by *Bill Lowrie*

Fred Bassett of Montgomery, Alabama, is dedicated to the study of hummingbirds (or Hummers) in south Alabama and Florida. He is one of the founders of The Hummer/Bird Study Group, Inc, based in Alabama. If you look at the range maps in your field guide you will see that the Ruby-throated Hummingbird is the only one native to Florida and the eastern United States. However, there are several other species native to the western United States that are frequently seen in the Panhandle and Big Bend areas of Florida beginning in August and continuing through the winter until late March or early April. Fred regularly travels through our region pur-

suing reports from friends and allies of hummers seen at backyard feeders and other locales. He captures them in a clever remote controlled trap that looks like a big bird cage and then measures, weighs, photographs, and bands them for future identification.

*(continued on page two)*

### Program Highlight Tuesday, May 21st

*(This is the 3rd Tuesday of the month due to Memorial Day on the following weekend.)*

Natural Gardens of the Big Bend: An Introduction to the Plant Communities of the Florida Panhandle with Gil Nelson

Gil Nelson is an outstanding naturalist and the author of several excellent books including *Exploring Wild North Florida*, *Exploring Wild Northwest Florida*, *The Trees of Florida*, *The Shrubs & Woody Vines of Florida*, and, most recently, *The Ferns of Florida*.

These books are available at most local bookstores as well as local nurseries and nature centers. Tell your friends and family that they don't want to miss this very special program. Let's have a good turnout for our last regular membership meeting until the fall.

*(Hummingbird banding, from page one)*

In his summary of his activities for the winter of 2002 Fred made the following observations.

“In south Alabama and Florida, I banded 156 new hummers of eight species including 89 Rufous, 37 Black-chinned, 19 Ruby-throated, 3 Calliope, 3 Broad-tailed, 2 Allen's, 2 Buff-bellied, and 1 Broad-billed. I have also caught 24 banded Rufous, two banded Black-chinned, one banded Calliope, and one banded Ruby-throated returning to the same home for the second year. In addition, I recaptured 6 hummers banded in other locations. The number of hummers I banded this winter is down a bit from last winter which I think has been caused by the warm weather. Last winter's extended stretch of freezing weather in December and January brought hummers to feeders in unprecedented numbers whereas we had only a short periods of freezing weather this winter. Comparisons with previous seasons are:

98/99 - 43 banded and 10 returns/recaptures  
99/00 - 47 banded and 16 returns/recaptures  
00/01 - 188 banded and 10 returns/recaptures.  
01/02 - 156 banded and 34 returns/recaptures.”

Fred's report continued with some local sites he visited including:

“12/19/01 - At Ila Roose's home in Pensacola FL, I caught an immature male Black-chinned I banded on 11/10/01 at Nell Lunsford's home in Apalachicola FL.

1/13/02 - At Mary Louise Ellis' home in Tallahassee FL, I caught an adult female Rufous banded 4/6/00 in Ingram TX 75 miles northwest of San Antonio by Hanna and Artie Richard. This is the farthest west a hummingbird has been banded and then recaptured in the eastern United States.

The recapture of hummers banded in other locations is important to expanding our knowledge of the migratory patterns of wintering hummers. These recaptures are proving our theory that wintering hummers tend to move south with increasing cold weather and then migrate west toward their nesting grounds.”

Fred also banded an Allen's Hummer at Jack Dozier's feeder in his back yard on Bald Point on January 11<sup>th</sup>. The Hummer/Bird Study Group is a not-for-profit membership organization with a web site at [www.hummingbirdsplus.org](http://www.hummingbirdsplus.org). They are located in Clay, Alabama and can be called at 205/681-2888.

### **Officers**

**President:** *Larry Thompson* 681-2591  
lthompson@leaf-envirolaw.org  
**Treasurer:** *Harvey Goldman* 385-5222  
Goldman@hep.fsu.edu  
**Secretary:** *Jim Crews* 567-8795  
jim\_crews@hotmail.com

### **Board Members**

*Marvin Collins* 224-9549  
mcollins@nettally.com  
*Hans Van Tol* 656-4039  
vantol@Magnet.FSU.EDU  
*Bill Lowrie* 962-4138  
blowrie@mindspring.com

### **Committee Chairs**

**Conservation:** *Hans van Tol*  
**Birdathon:** *Larry Thompson*  
**Education:** *Ellen Shelton*  
**Hospitality:** *Ed Gartner* 386-6543  
**Membership:** *Harvey Goldman*  
**Newsletter:** *Val Weeks* 671-3931  
vweeks@velocityonline.net  
**Publicity:** *Judy Rice*  
**Population:** *Harvey Goldman*  
**Field Trips:** *Marvin Collins*  
**Programs:** *Marvin Collins*  
**Past President:** *Jim Shelton* 942-5194  
birdjim@peoplepc.com  
**Ex-Officio, Sierra Liaison:** *Grayal Farr*  
385-5732

The Apalachee Audubon newsletter is published 8 times yearly (Sept. – May, except Dec.) by the Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc., P.O. Box 1237, Tallahassee, FL 32302-1237.

This newsletter is printed on partially recycled paper.



### **Mission Statement**

Protection of the environment through education, appreciation and conservation

# **Board Elections Set For May 21st**

**In April our board put together a proposed slate of new officers and directors for the upcoming elections at the May 21st membership meeting. Our President, Larry Thompson, is just completing the first of his two-year term. All other positions are up for election to a one-year term beginning July 1st. Several of the current board members and officers have agreed to serve for another year if they are elected.**

**We still have a number of vacancies and it's also important to add new blood. Please consider joining us as a director or officer, or nominate someone you think would do a good job. We also need chairs for key committees, such as membership. To nominate someone or volunteer yourself, contact one of the current officers (telephone numbers on page 3) or make your nomination from the floor May 21st.**

The final slate will be presented on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

*Monthly Meetings, field trips, conservation activities and bird walks*

# Audubon Calendar

Monthly meetings are free and open to the public. They are held at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Tallahassee, 2810 North Meridian Road. The evenings begin with an informal social at 7:00 p.m., followed by the program at 7:30. Unless otherwise stated, field trips will depart from the First Union Bank at 3400 S. Monroe Street (opposite the Fairgrounds). Note the time of departure for each trip. For more info check out our web site at <http://www.apalachee.org/calendar.html>.

**Saturday, May 4 - Saturday, May 4** – The scheduled Bird Walk is canceled due to various conflicts.

**Tuesday, May 21 - Tuesday, May 21** - Membership Meeting. Gil Nelson - Natural Gardens of the Big Bend: An Introduction to the Plant Community  
Tel: (904) 719-4400 Fax: (904) 719-4400 Email: [gil@audubon.org](mailto:gil@audubon.org)

**Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 1237**  
**Tallahassee, FL 32302-1237**

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Permit No. 30  
Tallahassee, FL

To check membership status, or to change address, call the National Audubon Society Office at 1-800-274-4201