THE KITE

Santa Fe Audubon Society
Melrose, FL

NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

santafeaudubon

http://www.santafeaudubon.org

Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

SPEAKER SERIES PROGRAM

LOOKING DOWN INSTEAD OF UP: FLORIDA NATIVE PLANTS AND HABITATS

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 10

speaker Susan Carr

6:45 PM at Trinity Episcopal Parish Hall
204 SR 26 downtown Melrose

You do not need to be a Santa Fe Audubon Society chapter member to attend our Speaker Series programs. All are welcome!



Ever wonder about the wildflowers growing in your favorite birding spots? Florida is home to a remarkable diversity of native plants and natural communities. We'll turn our gaze toward the ground for a colorful tour, from fall blooms in pine uplands to orchids and pitcher plants in wet prairies. Discover the floral richness of Florida's landscapes that birds call home.

Susan Carr will present on the diversity of native wildflowers of Florida's natural habitats, ranging from longleaf pine sandhills and scrub to wet prairies and marshes. She will introduce major plant groups—including asters, legumes, mints, orchids, milkweeds, and carnivorous plants—and emphasizes the importance of fire and land conservation in sustaining Florida's remarkable plant diversity.

The safety of our membership is of upmost importance, we encourage everyone to wear a mask.

The safety and well-being of our membership and board members is our top priority; therefore, our in-person Speaker Series may be postponed or canceled on short notice due to health related concerns. Cancellation notifications will be sent out via email, posted on our website and Facebook page.

FIELD TRIP

Saturday, NOVEMBER 14

SWEETWATER WETLANDS PARK

Join us for a walk at this man-made wetland where the birds are accustomed to humans. There are often opportunities for close-up looks and great photographs of birds and other wildlife.



Approx. 2 to 3 hours — Difficulty Level 2
May involve uneven terrain; 1-2 miles

PARKING FEE: $5.00 per vehicle

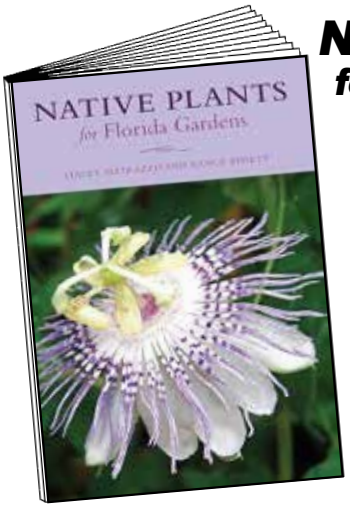
PLEASE CONTACT
Bette Rosenblatt
bette1016@gmail.com

To reserve your spot in case we need to notify you of any changes. Be sure to include the field trip name and date along with your name, phone number(s) and e-mail address.

Meet 8:15 AM
Sweetwater Wetlands Park
325 SW Williston Road, Gainesville

THERE ARE RESTROOMS AT THIS LOCATION

RECOMMENDED READING
from Jacqueline Williamson



NATIVE PLANTS for Florida Gardens
by Stacey Matrazzo and Nancy Bissett

Florida is home to an entire library of native plants that evolved to thrive in its range of climate regions. *Native Plants for Florida Gardens* profiles 100 Florida native wildflowers, shrubs, vines and trees that can transform typical Florida landscapes. With the expertise of the Florida Wildlife Foundation, anyone can create lovely, low-maintenance gardens that will tolerate Florida's roughest conditions, resist disease, and support biodiversity.

The Native Plant Connection

Visit the Florida Native Plant Society website:
https://www.fnps.org

Visit the Florida Wildflower Foundation website:
https://www.flawildflowers.org

For additional information on native plants for birds:
https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds

Bird of the Month

SANDHILL CRANE *(Antigone canadensis)*
band code "SACR"



Whether stepping singly across a wet meadow or filling the sky by the hundreds and thousands, Sandhill Cranes have an elegance that draws attention. These tall, gray-bodied, crimson-capped birds breed in open wetlands, fields, and prairies across North America. They group together in great numbers, filling the air with distinctive rolling cries. Mates display to each other with exuberant dances that retain a gangly grace. Sandhill Crane populations are generally strong, but isolated populations in Mississippi and Cuba are endangered.



COOL FACTS:
The earliest Sandhill Crane fossil, estimated to be 2.5 million years old, was unearthed in the Macasphalt Shell Pit here in Florida.



Sandhill Crane chicks ("colts") can leave the nest within 8 hours of hatching, and are even capable of swimming.

For more infomation about Sandhill Cranes visit:
https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Sandhill_Crane/id

Fun Fact:
A group of cranes are collectively known as a "construction", "dance", "sedge", and "swoop" of cranes.

SAVE THE DATE

Flatwoods Fire & Nature Festival

Saturday, January 23rd, 2027 - 10 am to 4 pm







Tabling questionnaires will be sent to those on our current list of participants, late October 2026.

The goal of this festival is to educate attendees on the role of fire in our pyrogenic ecosystems and introduce guests to many of the outstanding environmental organizations in this area.

Sponsored by: University of Florida, Florida Forest Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Alachua Conservation Trust, and Partners

Austin Cary Forest -
Roland T. Stern Learning Center
10625 NE Waldo Rd Gainesville, FL 32609

Ally Drake
Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
863-273-0629
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Joe Vaughn
Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
Joseph.Vaughn@MyFWC.com



SPEAKER SERIES PROGRAMS 2026 - 2027

December 8 ..... *THE AMAZING STURGEON* - Speaker: Dr. Ken Sulak

January 12..... *WILDLIFE CORRIDOR* - speaker Reed Noss

February 9 ..... *WOODPECKERS OF NORTH AMERICA* - speaker Deb Kainauskas

March 9 ..... *SFAS Conservationist of the Year, Election of Directors & Photo Show*

April 13 ..... *WILDLIFE RESCUE* - speaker Shawn McMahon

May 11..... *SPRINGS* - speaker Jim Gross

FIELD TRIPS 2026 - 2027

Reservations will be required so we may notify you on the event of a date change or cancellation due to weather, etc. When you make your reservation, please be sure to include your name, phone number, email and the number of participants.

Saturday, November 14, 2026 SWEETWATER WETLANDS PARK Gainesville

Saturday, January 9, 2027 ORANGE LAKE OVERLOOK Micanopy

Saturday, February 20, 2027 PLC - OCKLAWAHA TRACT

Saturday, March 20, 2027 CEDAR KEY BOAT TRIP *DETAILS IN EARLY 2027*

Saturday, April 24, 2027 MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS HOUSE TOUR AND HIKE - Cross Creek

Saturday, May 22, 2027 PRAIRIE CREEK PRESERVE Gainesville



- **BRING: Water, binoculars, hat, sunscreen, rain gear and face covering.**
- **WEAR STURDY WALKING SHOES.**
- **STAY HYDRATED, be safe and have FUN!**

SFAS has sanitized binoculars to loan. We all must remember to maintain safe personal distancing.

We suggest you bring your face mask just in case it is needed. It is easy to forget during the excitement of bird watching.