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Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

Santa Fe Audubon Society

Melrose, FL

**NOVEMBER 2025
NEWSLETTER**

SPEAKER SERIES PROGRAM SANDHILL CRANES

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 11
speaker Tim Dellinger

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!



Please join us for our November 11, 2025
Program about Sandhill Cranes.

***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 15

GTM NERR

**Guana Tolomato Matanzas
National Estuarine Research Reserve**

Teeming with life, the "Guana Tolomato Matanzas
National Estuarine Research Reserve" (GTM NERR)
is a dynamic, ever changing place with many
interconnected habitats from the ocean to the
forests, which provides for a great diversity of
plants and animals.

Approx. 2 - 3 hours

DIFFICULTY LEVEL 2

May involve uneven terrain; yellow trail is 2.2 miles round trip

PARKING FEE: \$3.00 per vehicle up to 8 people

TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT CONTACT
Nancy Staples nlshootie@gmail.com

Meet 9:00 AM at GTM NERR

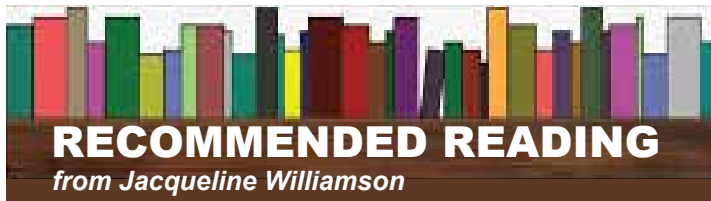
505 Guana River Rd, Ponte Vedra Bch
at the trailhead parking lot which is straight back as
far as you can drive once you turn off A1A (over a
fourth of a mile beyond the visitor center turnoff).
Restrooms are near the entrance and the parking
lot, where we will meet.

To find out more about GTM NERR go to

<https://gtmnerr.org>

We ask that all observe personal distancing and suggest
bringing a mask for everyone's protection, in case it is
needed.

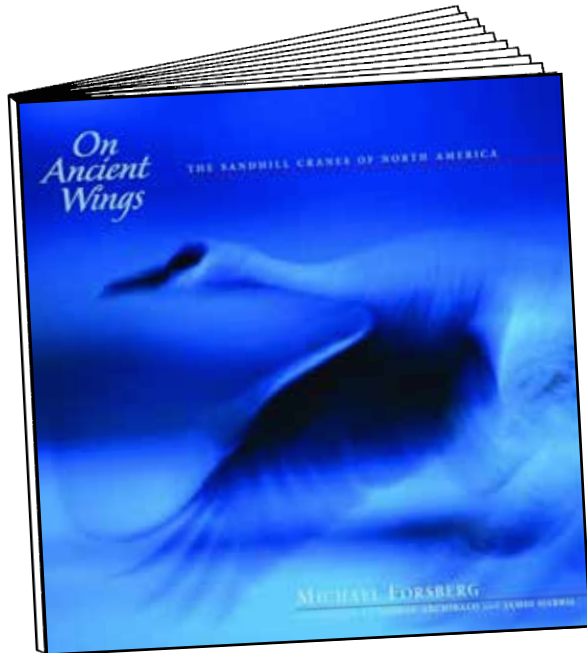
Reservations for each trip will be filled on a first-come first
served basis with waiting lists in case of participant cancellation.
Please be sure to include the field trip name and date along
with your name, phone number(s) and e-mail address, in case
we need to notify you of any changes.



ON ANCIENT WINGS

The Sandhill Cranes of North America

by Michael Forsberg



With 153 stunning color photographs, *On Ancient Wings* presents sandhill cranes in their wild but increasingly compromised habitats today. Over the course of five years, Michael Forsberg documented the tall gray birds in habitats ranging from the Alaskan tundra, to the arid High Plains, from Cuban nature preserves to suburban backyards. *On Ancient Wings* intertwines the lives of cranes, people, and their common places to tell an ancient story at a time when sandhill cranes and their wetland and grassland habitats face daunting prospects.

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 information 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.



Kestrel Corner

by Bill Chitty



As of late October, six of the nine gps tagged young Kestrels are still out and about, moving around and exploring in wide range of up to 84 miles one point to another. One of the more interesting developments is that it appears that the tagged male from box 26 has moved around and settled in the exact same little area that a female from last year (box 1) is still hanging around. We don't know they have found each other, but it sure sounds like romance to us. There is only one of this year's group who is still in Etoniah Creek State Forest. The rest have spread out from Etoniah to just southeast of Melrose to Penney Farms to Pomona Park and are still mostly moving around. Longest distance from natal box is 53 miles, which is much further than most published accounts suggest they travel.



In a welcome development, the last Kestrel nesting box still on a tree has been removed! We are moving four other boxes/poles during the off season. Three will go to the brand new Suttlemyre Forest tract south of Interlachen that will be managed by the Etoniah Creek Forestry team. Poles/boxes will be moved from installations around Etoniah that have not been productive in the last 10 years. The fourth new pole/box location will be in a powerline easement one half mile north of an existing location in Etoniah.

SFAS NEWS

THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION

ETONIAH ROSEMARY (*Conradina etonia*) Annual Survey October 28, 2025

The Etoniah Rosemary Survey is taken in Etoniah Creek State Forest every October. Santa Fe Audubon members and others from Putnam, Alachua, Marion, Lake, Citrus and Polk Counties volunteered this year.

The morning began with learning to ID the Etoniah Rosemary plant, with or without blooms. Flaggers mark the plants with orange survey flags. Counters then come along, pull up the flags and then give their numbers to the Florida Forest Service leader.



Some of this years volunteers include Charlie (the boss), Bill C., Bill G., Michael, Sandy, Lily, Sallie, and many others from Putnam, Clay and Alachua Counties. John from Bok Tower Gardens in Polk County and Abby Bartlett, Nora Marquez, Jimmy Hernandez and Alicia Velazquez from the FL Dept of Agriculture from Marion, Lake and Citrus Counties.

SPEAKER SERIES PROGRAMS 2025 - 2026

December 9 **THE HISTORY OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS**

WITH WATERFOWL - speaker Dr. Paul Gray

January 13 **BLACK BEARS** - speaker Allan Hallman

February 10 **BUTTERFLIES & POLLINATORS** - speaker Dr. Jaret Daniels

March 10 **SFAS Conservationist of the Year, Election of Officers & Photo Show**

April 14 **HORSESHOE CRABS** - speaker Dr. Jane Brockmann

May 12 **FROGS & AMPHIBIANS** - speaker Dr. Jon Johnson

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

Program topics and speakers are subject to change at the last minute for various reasons.

FIELD TRIPS 2025 - 2026

Reservations will be required. Field trips are subject to date change or cancellation due to weather, etc.

Saturday, January 17 Boat Trips on Santa Fe Lake - Melrose

Saturday, February 21 Masters Tract Stormwater Treatment Facility - Hastings

Saturday, March 21 Satsuma Springs Easement Property - Satsuma

Saturday, April 18 Orange Lake Overlook - Micanopy

FRIDAY, May 22 Anastasia Island Beach Bird Nesting - St. Augustine

ABOUT FIELD TRIPS

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED FOR ALL FIELD TRIPS

Please see contact info on page 1 to make your reservation.



When you make your reservation, please be sure to include your name, phone number, email and the number of participants.

- **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.