



Santa Fe Audubon Society

Melrose, FL



santafeaudubon

<http://www.santafeaudubon.org>



Santa Fe Audubon Society - Florida

SFAS NEWS

Our programs are usually held on the second Tuesday of the month (October 2025 to May 2026) beginning at **6:45 PM** in Trinity Episcopal's 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!

MARK THESE PROGRAM & FIELD TRIP DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR

SPEAKER SERIES PROGRAMS 2025 - 2026

October 14..... **BATS** - speaker Donna Bear

November 11 ... **SANDHILL CRANES** - speaker Tim Dillinger

December 9 Topic to be announced - speaker Dr. Paul Gray

January 13..... to be announced

February 10 **BUTTERFLIES & POLLINATORS**

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

April 4 **FROGS** - speaker Dr. Steve Johnson

May 12..... to be announced

FIELD TRIPS 2025 - 2026

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

Saturday, October 1 -----Smith Lake or Little Rain Lake Preserve Keystone Heights

Saturday, November 15 ----GTMNERR - Guana Tolomato Matanzas

National Estuarine Research Reserve - Ponte Vedra Beach

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

Saturday, February 21 -----Masters Tract Stormwater Treatment Facility - Hastings

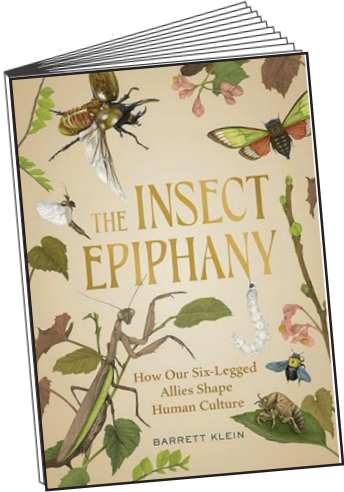
Saturday, March 21 -----Satsuma Springs Easement Property - Satsuma

Saturday, April 18 -----Orange Lake Overlook - Micanopy

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

RECOMMENDED READING
from Jacqueline Williamson

THE INSECT EPIPHANY
How Our Six-Legged Allies Shape Human Culture
by Barrett Klein



From entomologist Barrett Klein comes a buzz-worthy exploration of the many ways insects have affected human society, history, and culture.

JAY WATCH 2025

SFAS Board Members and others volunteered in this summer's local Florida Scrub-Jay "Jay Watch".

Photos courtesy of Bill Chitty, Michael Drummond & Sallie Carlock.



Kestrel Corner
by Bill Chitty

Something new happened this year that we have never seen with our Kestrel box project. We had a pair lay a second clutch of eggs! Their first clutch disappeared in mid May, probably eaten by a rat snake such as pictured below. The pair stayed together and decided right away to go ahead and start a new family, and not wait until next year. We found the new eggs last month and three of them have hatched as of July 5th. We will not know the status of the fourth egg until the next inspection, which won't be until mid July. As you can see from the picture, the tiny hatchlings are only a few days old, so that fourth egg may hatch yet.



BIRD OF THE MONTH

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

band code "KILL"



L to R: Wilson's Snipe, Least Sandpiper, Killdeer, Least Sandpiper and Lesser Yellowlegs

A shorebird you can see without going to the beach, Killdeer are graceful plovers common to lawns, golf courses, athletic fields, and parking lots. These tawny birds run across the ground in spurts, stopping with a jolt every so often to check their progress, or to see if they've startled up any insect prey. Their voice, a far-carrying, excited killdeer, is a common sound even after dark, often given in flight as the bird circles overhead on slender wings.

COOL FACTS:

The Killdeer's broken-wing act leads predators away from a nest, but doesn't keep cows or horses from stepping on eggs. To guard against large hoofed animals, the Killdeer uses a quite different display, fluffing itself up, displaying its tail over its head, and running at the beast to attempt to make it change its path.

For more information about Killdeer go to:

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Killdeer/overview>

Fun Fact: A group of Killdeers are collectively known as a "season" of Killdeers.

THE NATIVE PLANT CONNECTION

What are native plants?

Native plants are those that occur naturally in an area. Florida is home to thousands of native plant species. Many are stunningly beautiful; some occur nowhere else in the world. Over many millennia, our native wildlife – including birds – have adapted to the resources provided by the native flora. Native plants are, in a real sense, "home" for our birds.

Pokeweed is loved by many bird species. Red-eyed Vireos feast on these berries.



Why are native plants important for birds?

In a word: insects. Virtually all land birds – 96% - require insect food for their young. Native plants support healthy populations of insects, including caterpillars, that breeding birds feed their nestlings. However, nonnative plants contain foreign compounds that most native insects won't eat. Without insects for food, baby birds starve. By adding native plants to your yard, you can help repair the imbalance created by non-native plantings and ensure the survival of future generations of birds.

Your yard – and the kinds of plants in it – matters to birds! As natural areas for birds continue to decrease, so do native plants and the important food sources they provide for birds.



White caterpillars of the *Zebra Longwing* butterfly and orange caterpillars of the *Gulf Fritillary* butterfly feast on **Passion Vine**.

For additional information on native plants for birds:

<https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>

Florida Native Plant Society for info and plant lists and sources.

<https://www.fnps.org>

DISCOVER
200
1824-2024

**ALACHUA
COUNTY**
BICENTENNIAL



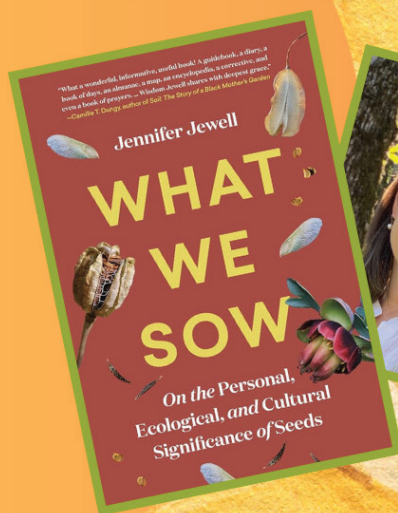
UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



Fall Horticultural Expo & Plant Market!

October 18, 2025

Alachua County Agriculture
& Equestrian Center
23100 W Newberry Road



- 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Free Entry
- Over 75 Vendors
- Wildflower Seeds
- Bugs, Birds & More
- KIDS ZONE
- Demonstrations
- Food Trucks

Jennifer Jewell

Keynote Speaker

“Cultivating Place” - Host
Nationally Syndicated Public
Radio Program & Author

WHERE THE
WILD
THINGS
GROW
2025

Create Your

BEST FALL GARDEN!



An Equal Opportunity Institution