If you’ve taken a tour of Ft Pickens, your guide may have explained how the keystone at the top of each arch is crucial to supporting the structure. A keystone species is crucial to supporting an ecosystem. Gopher tortoises are often described as keystone species because their burrows are used by more than 350 animals. The decline of the gopher tortoise can lead to the decline of the species that rely on this keystone. People and birds also have their keystones, and an important one is in decline, one you can find right outside your door, bees.

Many plants depend on bees for pollination and thus reproduction. People, birds and other animals depend on plants for their fruit and seeds. It’s hard to imagine that we could lose our pollinators, but there are actually parts of China where apples must be pollinated by hand. Honey bees may be the first bees that come to mind. They were introduced by Europeans and compete with native bees for forage. Because they are easy to transport in large numbers, they are best used to pollinate crops. There are many types of bees. You may have missed those in your garden that are as small as a grain of rice. Bumble bees are easy to spot and are a good indicator of how an ecosystem is doing. Of the 46 species of bumble bees in North America, six have been recorded in Florida.

How can you support bumble bees in your garden? Most important is to avoid or stop using herbicides and pesticides. The herbicides can destroy good bee foraging plants and the pesticides may kill the bees. If your garden attracts bees, other beneficial insects and birds will come and often keep the pests in check. I found aphids feasting on my lettuce and was excited to show them to a group of students. However, by the time the day came, all the aphids had been parasitized by tiny wasps.

As with birds, fragmentation and loss of habitat are affecting bees. They need three types of habitat; places to forage, places to nest, and a place to overwinter.

You can create habitat by maintaining natural areas and planting a variety of plants that bloom across the seasons, from late winter to late fall in our area. Native plants are considered best because they have evolved to be attractive to our bees. Late winter in my yard I recall them visiting the Chickasaw plum, crane's-bill, thistle, toadflax, evening primrose, clover, henbit, lyre-leafed sage, dewberry, blue-eyed grass, venus' looking glass and violets. They have colorful names and you'll recognize many as what's referred to as our winter weeds. They take no effort at all to grow.

Bumble bees are generalists and will visit a variety of flowers. As I look over my October garden I see bees visiting the blooms of grasses, dune sunflower, swamp sunflower, goldenrod, bee balm, gerardia, wild petunia, gaillardia, phlox, meadow beauty, obedient plant, thoroughwort, coreopsis, camphorweed, native hibiscus, morning glory, aster, fleabane, and a favorite, Spanish needle.

The remains of an old mouse nest is a favorite spot for bumbles to raise their young. They've also been known to reside in an old tree cavity, and this year I had colonies in two bird boxes. Some bees are ground nesters and others use twigs of plants with soft pith. Favorites are blackberry and elderberry. So, just as you'd do for birds, leave some snags and brush piles.

A bumble bee colony doesn't overwinter. Toward the end of their season, males and next year's queens are produced. The new queens mate and find a safe place to over-winter, so don't be too tidy. They are known to favor a snug spot at the base of bunch grasses such as little bluestem or muhly.

If you’d like to learn more about the pollinators in your garden visit the Xerces.org website.
Field Trips
Field trips are open to the public and free of charge, but contributions are appreciated.

Participants need to prepare for all field trips with comfortable walking shoes, water, snacks or lunch, sunscreen, binoculars for birding trips, field guides (optional) and insect repellant. Members and visitors are welcome at any experience level, so don’t be shy! Field trips are a great way for beginners to learn and share time with others who enjoy birds and nature. All field trips meet at 7:30 a.m. unless otherwise noted. Some sites such as State Parks and the National Seashore require entry fees. Remember to bring your pass to these sites if you have one.

We have adopted the American Birding Association’s Principles of Birding Ethics. Please read them on their website, http://www.aba.org/about/ethics.html.

☐ Saturday, November 14. Mobile Causeway Birding. Lucy and Bob Duncan will lead us to several birding spots around Mobile Bay and along Mobile Causeway. For details of the area, see http://www.alabamacoastalbirdingtrail.com/trails/eastern_shore_loop.asp. These areas can be very productive for shorebirds, ducks, late migrants and wintering songbirds. Expect moderate walking. We will plan to eat lunch at a restaurant. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Publix parking lot on the corner of Nine Mile and Pine Forest Roads, or at about 8:30 a.m. in Daphne in the parking lot behind the Shell Gas Station overlooking the bay (Alabama Coastal Birding Trail site #25). We expect to bird the Blakeley Mud Lakes and all participants must have permits on file prior to the trip. Access the permit form at http://www.aosbirds.org/BlakeleyPermits.php. We will return by midafternoon.

☐ Saturday, December 12. Ft. Walton Birding. The impoundments at Ft. Walton typically hold shorebirds and ducks, and the field edges are replete with wintering songbirds. Lucy and Bob Duncan will share shorebirding tips and sparrow insights as we get a good taste of winter birding. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Office Depot parking lot across Hwy 98 from Gulf Breeze Hospital, and return by mid-afternoon. Plan on lunch at a restaurant. Expect easy, moderate walking.

☐ Friday – Sunday, January 8-10, St. Marks NWR Birding. Larry Goodman and the Duncans will lead us to one of the southeast’s finest birding areas to see a variety of birds in diverse habitats. We can anticipate about 130 species for this trip! The trip pace will be moderate with some walking. We will arrive Friday in time to bird the afternoon and finish Sunday around noon. We will likely see manatees and close views of many ducks and water birds on the Wakulla River boat ride ($8) within the State Park. A limited block of rooms is being held for us at the Best Western Wakulla Inn & Suites located on Highway 98 near Crawfordville. To make your room reservations, call 850-926-3737 before Monday, Dec. 28 and ask for the “Pensacola Audubon” group rates (king at $75 or two queen beds at $80 plus tax). All rooms are nonsmoking. To sign up, send a $45 per participant contribution to FMW Audubon Society and call Lucy Duncan at 850-932-4792 and leave your name, telephone number and email address, or email her at town_point@bellsouth.net. A detailed itinerary will be emailed in late December.

Birdwalks
These short birdwalks are designed to introduce “future birders” into the world of “Bird Watching.” If you have ever been curious about this activity or just enjoy the birds in your backyard, come join us to learn about our area birds. Families with children are welcome. Remember to bring your binoculars and bottled water. Call 850-291-5426 for details.

☐ Saturday, November 21, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Wildlife Sanctuary of Northwest Florida, 105 N. S Street, Pensacola.
Meet in front of Wildlife Sanctuary. We will walk through the Sanctuary to get a closeup look at the birds in recovery there. It will give us an opportunity to study the physical adaptations of each species.

☐ Saturday, January 16, 2016, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Gulf Islands National Seashore, Hwy 98 Gulf Breeze
Meet on the Observation Deck behind the Main Office building at the Gulf Islands National Seashore on the south side of Hwy 98 in Gulf Breeze (East of the Office Depot Shopping Center). We will be there looking for ducks, grebes, gulls and terns in Santa Rosa Sound. We will also walk the trails in search of wintering songbirds, vireos and sparrows.

☐ Sunday, February 14, 2016, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Great Backyard Bird Count - at Ann and Dan Forster’s home, 447 Creary Street, Pensacola, 32507. To see yard and shorebirds; bring binoculars and warm clothing. Call Ann Forster for information, 456-4421.
Chapter Meetings

Our monthly meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in Room 2142 of the Baroco Science Center (Bldg. 21) on the main campus of Pensacola State College unless otherwise noted. Refreshments are provided and guests are welcome!

☐ Dec. 10, 2015. Susan Cerulean will give a talk entitled Coming to Pass: Florida’s Coastal Islands in a Gulf of Change. She is an author, a Naturalist, and an Earth Advocate. She has written and advocated on behalf of Florida and its wildlife from her home in Tallahassee since 1981. In March 2009, Ms. Cerulean was honored by Tallahassee Community College as one of the “Women Taking the Lead to save our Planet.” Her nature memoir Tracking Desire: A journey after Swallow-tailed Kites (University of Georgia Press, 2005) was named Editors’ Choice by Audubon magazine (March 2005). Her latest book is entitled Florida’s Coastal Islands in a Gulf of Change. She will be bringing some of her books for sale and signing.

Members attending the meeting are requested to bring snacks and/or desserts that will be shared following the program.

☐ Jan. 28, 2016. The program will consist of a slide show of photographs of birds taken by members of our Society. The slides will be organized into a power point presentation by the program chairperson and individual members will be asked to describe their slides. If you would like to present some of your recent photos, please contact Larry Goodman, lrgoodman@bellsouth.net.

www.FMWAudubon.org
www.facebook.com/FMWAudubonPensacola

Board of Directors Meetings

Nov. 5, Dec. 3, Jan. 7—The Board meets at 7:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 33 East Gregory St. Meetings are open to the public. Date and location may change. Please contact a Board member to confirm date, time and location if you wish to attend. Check with any board member for details.

Information about activities with the Longleaf Chapter, Native Plant Society may be found at http://longleafpine.fnpschapters.org/

President’s Message

FMWAS has a hard-working board and membership. Some times we need to stop and give a good pat on the back to some of the people who are making this a great organization:

… Congratulations to Annelise Reunert and Becky Grass for organizing the Bird Classes. Hope we can convince them to have spring classes.

… Jan Lloyd and Ann Forster set the bar high with their excellent presentation on "Shorebirds" for the first class. But the hero of the day was Dan Forster who made a little boy's day. (See the Tripping column, page 5 for details!)

… Jenn Butera gave an inspiring presentation on "Reaching a Diverse Audience" at Audubon Academy in Panama City on Sept. 12. Six of our members attended and heard ideas on "Attracting New Leadership."

… Larry Goodman and Lucy Duncan continue to provide good programs and challenging field trips. Support our chapter by showing up!

… Brenda Callaway continues to attract new people to our chapter through Facebook and Meet-up. Good on ya!

… Welcome Brenda & Jerry Callaway and Daniel Stangeland to the Field Trip Leaders club! Many praises were heard from their recent trips.

… Barbara Albrecht will represent our chapter at the Blackwater River State Park Advisory Group's long range planning committee. Barbara is a tireless advocate for our environment.

… Welcome to our two new directors on the board. Steve Coster and Lilian Mauney!

… Take a look at our new updated website, www.fmwaudubon.org, and read about members’ in-the -field experiences and birding trips. Our calendar of activities is also on that page. Lilian will continue to update this page every month and add new stories.

… Many thanks to the members who came to help at the 2-day Munson Heritage Festival. So many people came to our display with questions about their backyard birds and you gave them answers. FMWAS made many new friends. We looked so good in our new event tent! A special shout-out to Roberta Bonwit for donating this new tent.

Thanks to everyone who gives time and effort to FMWAS.

Peggy Baker, PAPC
FIELD NOTES

Tolerating summer heat to go birding sometimes produces surprising results as you’ll see below. Fall migration 2015 put 2014’s to shame. Beginning with an unusually cool front on 13 September, migrants arrived early and in full force. Normally, we wait until the last week of September or the first week in October for things to start happening. Not this year. Twelve species of warblers were seen in the Duncan yard on 13 September. However, the remainder of the season produced no spectacular fallouts, but a steady stream of migrants after each succeeding front into mid-October. Several outstanding rarities were found, many with a decidedly western flavor.

SUMMER REPORTS: Very rare in June were two American Oystercatchers found by Ron Sinclair at Ft. Pickens on 15 Jun. A Brown Booby* lingering at Destin Pass 27 – 29 Jun (Malcom Swan, Scot Duncan) provided excitement. A nest with two young Swallow-tailed Kites discovered by Daniel Stangeland in Pace 20 Jun and photographed by Larry Goodman provided the first documented breeding record for our area. Two American Robins in Gulf Breeze 16 Jun (Dana Timmons) were unusual in summer at that location. The exotic Pin-tailed Whydah continues to be reported in Pensacola (Bernice Gilley, Larry Goodman, Gary Money). An American Bittern at Taminco/Eastman Sanctuary 20 Jul provided the first July area record (Bruce Furlow, Larry Goodman, Les Kelly). Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were reported from Taminco/Eastman Sanctuary, ECUA holding pond and International Paper Wetlands.

FALL REPORTS: The Gulf produced some great sightings. James Pfeiffer observed 3 very rare Great Shearwaters* near Pensacola Pass on 2 Aug. On 15 Aug, the Duncans spotted 2 Sooty Shearwaters* and 5 Audubon’s Shearwaters* from “Pelagic Perch” (the pink restrooms at Ft. Pickens entrance), two very rare species seldom seen from shore. The “secret” to finding pelagics from shore? Wait for strong onshore winds during the warm months, find an elevated shelter with a windbreak, set up scope and watch. The day of our shearwaters had SE & S winds @ 20 mph and unsettled weather in the Gulf.

Encouraging were 5 Cerulean Warblers seen in the Duncan’s yard in Jul & Aug. This was a high for a species in steady decline nationally. Participants in the FMWAS field trip to Ft. Pickens 12 Sep were rewarded with knockout looks of a Yellow-headed Blackbird*. A Parasitic Jaeger* spotted by Chris Holt 17 Sep at Opal Beach was a great find. An awesome find at Ft. Pickens on 18 Sep was a very rare vagrant from the tropics, a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher*. Intrepid birders Jerry & Brenda Callaway found this 4th area record and 7th for the state. Brenda’s excellent photos made for easy acceptance by the Florida Ornithological Society’s Records Committee. As an encore, and topping it off, on 1 Oct they found and photographed an Empidonax flycatcher at Ft. Pickens which they suspected was a “Western Flycatcher”* (Cordilleran/Pacific-slope). These flycatchers were split recently from Western Flycatcher. Brenda’s excellent photos were sent to the FOSRC. Birders who examined the photos concur that it is a probable “Western.” If accepted, it will constitute a 2nd state record! The Duncans were fortunate enough to see the bird on 2 Oct.

An Eastern Phoebe discovered by Daniel Stangeland on 19 Sep at Ft. Pickens was a very early fall migrant. Very rare and a difficult ID was a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher* seen by the Duncans in Gulf Breeze on 27 Sep. An exciting and very rare find from Eurasia was a Ruff* spotted and photographed at the Ft. Walton Beach Spray Fields on 4 Oct by Daphne Asbell. It lingered to 6 Oct and thrilled many observers. Continuing the western flavor, Brenda Callaway observed and photographed a very rare Western Tanager* at Ft. Pickens (where else?) on 10 Oct. It was seen again on 11 Oct by Daniel Stangeland. Two Lincoln’s Sparrows* were in Gulf Breeze 12 – 14 Oct (Bob & Lucy Duncan).

Continuing our virtual trip out west, Jerry Callaway found a male Vermilion Flycatcher* at Ft. Pickens on 14 Oct. The species is rare but fairly regular in our area. A Mexican/S. Texas vagrant, 2 Groove-billed Anis* were found by the Duncans at Ft. Pickens on 15 Oct. Jerry & Brenda Callaway and Glen Blanchard also got to see this bird that looks like it was put together by a committee! The Duncans also found 3 Clay-colored Sparrows* there on 15 Oct. On 17 Oct with the advent of our first October cool front and north winds, the Duncans found a subadult Swainson’s Hawk amongst raptors migrating west along the Gulf Breeze peninsula.

The Skimmer welcomes reports of noteworthy birds. If you have something to report, please call Bob or Lucy Duncan at 932-4792. Species with asterisks require documentation so that they can become part of the ornithological record.
For several years our chapter offered bird-watching classes under the tutelage of several different but very admired teachers. Popular demand has encouraged us to start a new series of classes. This time there will be several “teachers” who will cover areas with which they are most familiar.

We have always felt that the best way to start learning about birds is to study those birds that stay put. The birding experience that got Dan and me going was an Atlanta Audubon winter field trip to Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge on the Alabama/Georgia line. We had our cheap binoculars and my Roger Tory Peterson guide from college so we felt totally prepared. Our leader had a telescope. He set up and peered into the distance and everyone lined up to look. We eventually saw ten or twelve species of ducks and a Golden Eagle. By golly, they all looked just like the illustrations and were just beautiful. We were hooked. Dan asked the leader if there were any other good places near by and he said to go to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge south of Tallahassee so we drove straight down there stopping to buy toothbrushes and toothpaste. When we got to St. Marks there were more ducks and lots of shorebirds. That presented a challenge and necessitated ordering a telescope as soon as we got back to Atlanta. Only after we started going on field trips to wooded areas did we realize how important it is to start with some successes and not get frustrated with the difficulty of identifying busy little birds high in the trees.

On October 10, we hosted the first field trip of the new beginners’ class at our house. We were worried about the neap tide situation covering the flats where the coastal birds usually stand. It turned out that the high water concentrated the birds so that we could set up the scopes in one place and work through the identifications. Jan Lloyd had done an excellent job with the classroom part which prepared the class to think about the field marks to notice. One of the class members (caught in a parental dilemma) brought her young son. After Dan ferried us all over to the island, he turned to Jonathan and asked him if he wanted to go for a boat ride. One of the other class members decided that sounded more exciting than looking at gulls and terns and joined them. Off they went at warp speed to explore the bayou and race to the Naval Air Station to look at the rescue boat. They stopped and fished and still made it back on time. Jonathan was all grins. He had caught a fish and said that was fastest he had ever gone in a boat. An all around success for class number one.

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**Tiger Point Bluebird Trail Fledges Its Second Eagle**

2015 has turned out to be a good one for us. We fledged our normal number of 300 Eastern Bluebirds, plus about 25 other birds, mostly Carolina Chickadees. In past years, we also have had Brown Headed Nuthatches and just about every species of cavity nester in the area use our boxes.

Good fortune appeared in March, when we met Gulf Breeze High School student Jacob Tutt and his parents. Together we worked out a plan to revamp the Tiger Point Golf Course Bluebird Trail. Jacob worked very hard, first coming up with a plan, and then implementing it. We now have many new nest boxes, and some of the older ones were relocated to be more beneficial. Jacob has transformed the trail at the golf course. Hopefully next year’s nesting season will be even better for our bluebirds.

Along with the Bluebird Trail at Tiger Point, we also have boxes at our church, the cemetery on Highway 98, the Gulf Breeze Zoo and wherever else someone will put one up. I encourage everyone to put up a bluebird nest box. Just remember, keep out the House Sparrows. Under no circumstances do you want any of them near your nest box. They kill our birds and take over the nest.

Within the past 23 years, we have fledged about 7,000 Eastern Bluebirds in southern Santa Rosa County. Years ago, a teacher (whom you all know) told us that we could never get bluebirds here due to the surrounding waterways. Well, as I heard said once, “Build it. They will come.”

Tiger Point is also about to fleece its second Eagle—Eagle Scout that is. All that is left is his ceremony, which will probably be held next January. Congratulations to Jacob and many thanks for your hard work!

*Phil Berry and Jackie Zachem*
**Bluebirds—Who doesn’t love bluebirds?**
To promote the recovery of bluebirds and other native cavity-nesting bird species in North America, the North American Bluebird Society was incorporated in 1978. In September, at its 38th annual convention in Magog, Quebec, Phil Berry and Jackie Zachem were recognized for their work with the organization. Phil currently serves as 1st Vice President for Affiliate Relations. They had a wonderful time meeting with Andre and France Dion, old friends of Lawrence Zeleny, the founder of the Society.


**Christmas Bird Counts**

□ Dec 14. Choctawhatchee Bay (Ft. Walton-Destin) CBC. Alan Knothe will organize and compile this CBC. Contact him at 850-208-1780 or birdman6419@cox.net.

□ Dec 19. Pensacola CBC. Bill Bremser will organize and compile the annual Pensacola CBC. This year is the 116th CBC conducted by the Audubon Society, a tradition which was started in 1900. Everyone is welcome to participate. Expertise level is not a criterion, the more eyes and ears we have the better the results. If interested, contact Bill Bremser at 828-733-7444 or billbremser@gmail.com.

□ Jan 2. Gulf Shores CBC. Howard Horne and Greg Jackson will organize this CBC. Contact Howard at (251) 605-9043 if you’d like to participate.

**Be Ready to Host a Wintering Hummingbird**

Leave up at least one hummingbird feeder—you might get lucky and attract a wintering hummingbird.

No need to buy ready-made nectar, the birds get all the vitamins, minerals, and protein they need from natural nectar and insects. Partially fill your feeder with a mixture of one part table sugar to four parts water. Do not use food coloring. Do not use honey or artificial sweeteners, they are harmful to the birds.

*Read more on the next page—Wintering Hummingbirds*

**Sea Turtle Update**

Hatchlings from late nests often struggle during cold spells. Instead of emerging *en masse* - or in what we call "a boil" - they appear in dribbles with a few coming out each night over a longer period of time.

Sea turtles are cold-blooded creatures and their metabolism adjusts to the temperature of their surroundings. We have had several nights with temperatures falling into the upper fifties on the beach, so a good portion of the hatchlings which emerged lately have been in a lethargic state. Once they make it to the Gulf water, which is almost 20 degrees warmer than the air temperature, their tiny flippers go into overdrive, propelled by instinct and the will to survive.

This has been a record-breaking year for our sea turtles with a total of 78 nests and, at this point, we have witnessed 5,167 hatchlings march into the Gulf of Mexico.

*DJ Zemenick*

**Whazzat? A bird designed by a committee?**

An immensely thick bill like a nutcracker, but the bird mostly eats insects!
A long, floppy tail that looks as if it’s about to fall off…
Shaggy, disheveled feathers like a ‘bad hair day’

It is a shy big bird, larger than a grackle, that disappears in the thicket right in front of you, but comes up for a quick “look around” before diving again for cover.

*It’s a Groove-billed Ani!*

Start looking for this odd bird, the Groove-billed Ani. Two have been reported in coastal Mississippi and another is at St. Marks. Many anis show up at Ft. Pickens. There are forty one records of this species in our area through the present date. Let us know if you see one.

*Lucy Duncan*
Skimming—Neighbors, We Can’t Live Without ‘Em

Jere French

My neighbor’s driveway was enclosed by two large oaks. He had them cut down because their root system was encroaching on the pavement, lifting and cracking it. Now he has a nice smooth new drive, off of which the sun glares brightly. My pines are creating a rippling effect in my own driveway, and together with the crushing weight of the truck that once brought sand for storm replacement, the pavement now suffers from a rising and sinking surface, making for something of a carnival ride, entering or backing out. I’ve thought of replacing the pavement with perhaps a gravel drive, for the pleasing effect of a country lane, while saving the tree roots, but so far I’ve done nothing. The vision of my leather ferns, jasmine, and yaupon being crushed under heavy booted workmen gives me pause. I can always back-up slowly.

Another neighbor rides through his mini-estate atop a mowing tractor. He wears earmuffs and a surgical mask to protect him from the ear-splitting roar and the toxic fumes of his insufferable machine, as he rumbles doggedly over grass and pavement alike. Must I wear protective headgear as well? I trim and prune my wilderness by hand, and push a near noiseless electric mower over the bit of grass I need for my kayaks and lawn bowling matches. My neighbor believes my wild garden to be unsightly; I judge his maintenance methods extreme.

A third neighbor might be better suited to condo living, maybe high above us, with perhaps a splendid view of the bay. His present vista across that mighty stretch of water causes him angst apparently, and he has dealt with fears of flood and desolation by erecting a large stone bulwark between himself and the anticipated deluge, effectively blocking the magnificent prospect altogether. Additionally, he seems unaware of the overriding natural beauty enclosing our peaceful domain. My yardman and I work hard to keep it thus, this small wilderness which my neighbor little credits, or even notices—until, alas, it creeps too close. Should I warn him of a bear seen recently, just across our street?

Thus four homeowners in a row manifest widely varying perceptions of gardening and nature in this pleasantly wooded bay front. Are we all nuts? Surely I, with my crumbling pavement, could qualify. Alas no, nor is anyone necessarily wrong—until we get into such sticky matters as conservation, noise and air pollution, pesticide contamination, wildlife and habitat protection, or mere aesthetics, none of which rise to the level of bearing arms or calling 911. An honest difference of opinion is a sacred dictum of democracy—in such matters as how we view nature, or even a flag.

Wintering Hummingbirds

Many in the Pensacola area enjoy Ruby-throated hummingbirds during summer and fall but are not aware a hummingbird might spend the winter in their yard. People take down their feeders during late fall because of the mistaken idea feeders will entice the birds to remain and then succumb to cold weather. When it is time to migrate, they will depart with or without your feeders. Most migrate to the tropics by mid November. A few do stay for the winter, and small numbers of several species of western hummingbirds migrate east to spend the winter in the eastern United States.

I have banded ten species of hummingbirds in south Alabama and the Florida panhandle during the winter—Ruby-throated, Black-chinned, Rufous, Allen’s, Broad-tailed, Calliope, Buff-bellied, Broad-billed, Anna’s, and Costa’s. Leave a feeder up all winter, you may have one spend the winter. They are cold hardy and not harmed by the mild winter weather. Don’t give up, keep the feeder up. Most show up in Dec. and Jan.

Put your feeder where it can be observed and maintained easily. Partially fill it with a mixture of one part table sugar to four parts water.

Wintering hummingbirds are not lost birds. They often demonstrate great site fidelity staying the entire winter in one location. Some return to winter at the same home year after year. A Buff-bellied hummingbird came back for 8 winters at a Pensacola home and a Rufous returned for 7 winters.

I have a continuing research project to document wintering hummingbirds. If you have a hummingbird at your feeder between 15 November and 1 March, please contact me at fhound@aol.com or 334-868-9658. I will come to your home capture, identify, band, and photograph your hummingbird. I will let you release it back into your yard and give you pictures of your special bird. Banding will not harm it or cause it to leave. I hope to see you with a hummer this winter.

Fred Bassett
Chapter Program Meetings—Dec 10 & Jan 28
(see page 3)

Field Trips—Nov 14, Dec 12, & Jan 8-10
(see page 2)

Birdwalks—Nov 21, Jan 16, & Feb 14
(see page 2)

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Web Master Debra Jones

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(includes Audubon Florida and our local chapter)

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The National Audubon Society occasionally makes its membership list available to carefully selected organizations whose mailings you might find of interest. To have your name omitted from this list, please check here. ____

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