

Festival of the Cranes
Saturday, January 13, 2018

Schedule of Events

- 6:30 AM** *Sunrise Breakfast at the Refuge.* The early birders get the biscuits! Come out and enjoy a good breakfast with other hearty souls in the Visitor Center classroom before joining former Refuge Manager Dwight Cooley on an early morning birding walk. Watch the cranes and other waterfowl arriving in the fields to begin their day of feeding and loafing. The Wheeler Wildlife Refuge Association will be providing and serving the Jack's 6th Avenue sausage biscuit, breakfast pastry, coffee and orange juice. \$5.00 per person and all proceeds benefit future refuge programs. (Classroom)
- All Day** Visit the Observation Building to view thousands of Sandhill cranes along with several Whooping cranes, ducks, geese, raptors and perhaps a bald eagle from the comfort of the heated building. There are bleachers and spotting scopes available along with volunteers and staff standing by to answer all your questions.
- 8:00 AM** *Birding 101.* Join members of the Alabama Ornithological Society/Tennessee Valley Audubon Society for a beginner course in birding. Learn the basics of birding as you walk along the grounds of the Visitor Center. Meet at the VC information desk.
- 9 – 10:30 AM** *Children's Activity in the Classroom.* Calling all kids (regardless of age) to join in the fun educational activities – create a crane mask, crane puppet and crane origami. Visit with the FWS Blue Goose and the ICF Whooping Crane mascots.
- 9:00 AM** *David Akoubian–Bear Woods Photography Workshop.* David has been a photographer since 1972 when his father presented him with his first camera, but his career in photography started in 1992. David learned his craft originally as a painter and from his father who shares his love of nature and photography. Early in his career he traveled with, learned from and taught beside some of the masters of nature photography including John Shaw, Art Wolfe, Galen Rowell, Bryan Peterson, Pat O'Hara, and Rod Planck. David has been teaching photography since 1994 in the classroom and leading workshops around the United States. (Auditorium)
- 10:30** *Adventures with John James Audubon*
Storyteller *Brian "Fox" Ellis* portrays Audubon in a dynamic performance that engages listeners in scientific inquiry and natural history, art appreciation and ornithology. Come spend an hour in the studio of one of America's greatest naturalists and wildlife artist. Listen to tales of his adventures in the wilds of America! (Auditorium)
- 11 – 1 PM** *Domino's Pizza Lunch with drink and dessert, sponsored by WWRA.*
\$5.00 per person and all proceeds benefit future refuge programs. Have a good lunch and help support the Wheeler Wildlife Refuge Association. (Classroom)
- 12:00 PM** *Wheeler Video Premier*
The latest video from volunteer photographer/videographer George Lee. (Auditorium)
- 1:30 – 3 PM** *Children's Activity in the Classroom* continues.
- 1:00 PM** *Michael Graham Allen - Flutist*
Michael Graham Allen is the founder, principal flutist and composer of the band COYOTE OLDMAN. An early researcher and builder of ancient flutes of North America. M.G. Allen has been a professional flute maker since the mid 1970's. (Auditorium)
- 3:00 PM** *Nature Hike with John James Audubon*
Join John James Audubon, as portrayed by *Brian "Fox" Ellis*, on a unique bird watching adventure as he regales listeners with his in-depth observations of the species we happen to see along the trail. Long before Stokes and Sibley, Audubon published several pages of field notes for all 435 species of birds that he painted, an "Ornithological Biography," that totals several thousand pages. (Atkeson Cypress Trail)

Festival of the Cranes
Sunday, January 14, 2018

Schedule of Events

- 8:00 AM** *Birding 101.* Join members of the Alabama Ornithological Society/Tennessee Valley Audubon Society for a beginner course in birding. Learn the basics of birding as you walk along the grounds of the Visitor Center. Meet at the VC information desk.
- 9:00 AM** *David Akoubian–Bear Woods Photography Workshop.* David has been a photographer since 1972 when his father presented him with his first camera, but his career in photography started in 1992. David learned his craft originally as a painter and from his father who shares his love of nature and photography. Early in his career he traveled with, learned from and taught beside some of the masters of nature photography including John Shaw, Art Wolfe, Galen Rowell, Bryan Peterson, Pat O'Hara, and Rod Planck. David has been teaching photography since 1994 in the classroom and leading workshops around the United States. David presents and leads workshops at many of the country's top photographic conferences such as the Photographic Society of America Annual Conference, as well as many camera clubs across the United States. (Classroom)
- 9:00 AM** *The Comic Mis-Adventures of Lewis and Clark with Brian "Fox" Ellis as Meriwether Lewis*
Join the Corps of Discovery in this humorous and informative blend of stories and song, journal excerpts and American Indian folklore. Imagine an evening in Philadelphia with some of the greatest scientific minds in Early American history where Meriwether Lewis reveals for the first time many of the scientific discoveries of the Corps of Discovery. Encountering grizzly bears and collecting soil samples, capturing prairie dogs and hunting for antelope, Lewis catalogued 122 new animal species and 178 new plants. In this original performance Lewis sings the praises of the geology, diverse flora and fauna, and the web of life that binds us to the land. The expedition was first and foremost a scientific expedition and this program brings the scientific process to life in what one reviewer called "The perfect blend of science and stand-up comedy!" (Auditorium)
- 11:00 AM** *Michael Graham Allen - Flutist*
Michael Graham Allen is the founder, principal flutist and composer of the band COYOTE OLDMAN. An early researcher and builder of ancient flutes of North America. M.G. Allen has been a professional flute maker since the mid 1970's. (Auditorium)
- 1:30 – 3 PM** *Children's Activity.* Calling all kids (regardless of age) to join in the fun educational activities – create a crane mask, crane puppet and crane origami. Visit with the FWS Blue Goose and the ICF Whooping Crane mascots. (Classroom)
- 1:30 PM** *Prince Maximilian & Karl Bodmer: Touring the Wilderness of North America - Brian "Fox" Ellis*
Join the Prince of Wied, Maximilian, as he takes you on a tour of North America as he saw it in 1832-33-34. Using Karl Bodmer's illuminating illustrations, Prince Maximilian will escort the audience on an adventure from the Grand Banks of Newfoundland to the Great Falls of the Missouri River, from New Harmony, Indiana to New Orleans, Louisiana. Travel with this intrepid explorer to meet America's best scientific minds, explore the West in the wake of Lewis and Clark, camp among the Mandan, Lakota, Crow and Omaha and participate in traditional American Indian drumming songs. Storyteller and author Brian "Fox" Ellis steps into the shoes of Prince Maximilian allowing the audience to step back in time. Blending history, science, art and cultural anthropology, the Prince gives us a unique view of America as he saw it in the early 1830s. Much of the text for this performance comes directly from his journals. The backdrop includes the landscapes, portraits, and scenes from everyday life painted by Karl Bodmer. (Auditorium)
- 3:00 PM** *Wheeler Video Premier*
The latest video from volunteer photographer/videographer George Lee. (Auditorium)

**Auburn University Southeastern Raptor Center
At the
Princess Theater**

**Saturday
11:00 am & 1:30 pm**

**Sunday
1:30 pm**

Due to the popularity of the raptor presentations during the Festival of the Cranes and the limited seating and parking at the refuge visitor center, the three raptor presentations will take place at the historic Princess Theater in downtown Decatur. This will ensure everyone will have the opportunity to enjoy this wonderful entertaining and educational program. The presentations are free as always and everyone is invited to attend. To make it even more convenient to enjoy all the events at Festival of the Cranes, a shuttle will be available to take you to and from the Wheeler Visitor Center to the Princess Theater and other areas of historic downtown Decatur.