

WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc.

the WATERKEEPER® Alliance Member

for the Suwannee River Basin as:

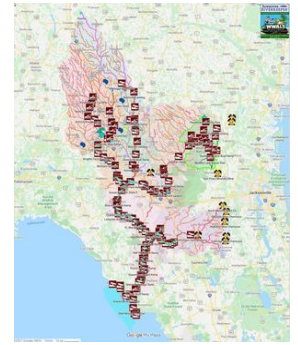
PO Box 88, Hahira, GA 31632

850-290-2350

wwalswatershed@gmail.com,

contact@suwanneeriverkeeper.org

www.wwals.net, suwanneeriverkeeper.org



October 2023 Tannin Times

WWALS Biota — a month for yellow

Native yellow flowers, such as “ditch sunflowers” and goldenrods, light up our landscape this month. So do many small birds with matching bright yellow—both year-round residents and migratory warblers.

I confess to having difficulty distinguishing the many warbler species often spied in the WWALS watershed in October, but there is one I can confidently recognize every time: the male common yellowthroat, *Geothlypis trichas*. Smallish birds, mostly drab olive in color, the adult males sport a sunny yellow throat and a broad black face stripe across their eyes, topped by a thin white line. Common, but not commonly seen due to their preference for foraging for insects low to the ground in dense brush and weeds, the common yellowthroat, with a call that sounds like “witchey, witchey, witchey” and a striking black mask, seems like a good fit for a month ending with Halloween.

As you head out on the waterways this month, be on the lookout for all the beautiful yellow natives. —Bret Wagenhorst



Common yellowthroat
Photo: Bret Wagenhorst

WWALS River Revue, Songwriting Winners Announced

Thanks to Chuck Roberts for M.C.ing the successful first-ever [WWALS River Revue](#), a sit-down fundraising dinner, which sold out! Ten musicians wrote songs and seven sang them, about the delights of the waters of the Suwannee River Basin and the need to preserve them against numerous threats. Jane Fallon came all the way from Dunedin, Florida, to the Turner Arts Center in Valdosta, Georgia, to sing a story about legendary Sun Daughters reflecting on a proposed mine near the Okefenokee Swamp, the headwaters of the Suwannee River. The three judges marked her high on storytelling and presenting the value of the waters, on originality of lyrics and music, and on performance, with extra credit for naming waterways. She took home First Prize in the Sixth Annual Suwannee Riverkeeper Songwriting Contest. Photo by Chuck Roberts: Cindy Bear and Franc Robert won Best Folk; Jane Fallon won First Prize; Bacon James won Best Song from Outside the Suwannee River Basin; Kyle Bird Chamberlain and David Rodock tied for Best from Inside; Chamberlain won Best Blues; Rodock won Best AmeriKinda; Kevin Stephenson won Best Country. Robert Thatcher is not pictured.



Special Eddyline Kayak Raffle - only 30 tickets available

[Eddyline Sandpiper Kayak](#), slightly used: \$100 a ticket, drawing once 30 tickets are taken. [It lists for \\$1,749.00](#). Includes Kayak, paddle, PFD, lock, and straps. This is in addition to the November drawing of the annual kayak raffle.



WWALS Working Hard for Your Watershed

Board and Staff. WWALS [seeks a Development Director](#). Also an Executive Director, perhaps separated into multiple functions.

Hurricane Idalia. Many people are still dealing with damaged houses or vehicles. Valdosta Engineer Ben O’Dowd posted [a map of road closures](#). Fortunately, there was only one fatality. The Dead River Sink is inaccessible due to Jennings Bluff being used for debris processing. [Langdale Park is open, but you must walk in](#). Many [Florida parks were closed](#); some still are.

Rezoning. On September 12th [the Lowndes County Commission unanimously denied](#) a rezoning that [WWALS and many others opposed](#) on Quarterman Road in an agricultural and forestry area. This is the third such rezoning denial in two years.

Okefenokee NWR as UNESCO World Heritage Site. The [U.S. Department of the Interior on September 22 filed a notice](#) that it is asking ONWR to draft a nomination for itself. WWALS [has supported this](#) for years.

Strip mine near the Okefenokee. After Suwannee Riverkeeper presented it in August, [on September 11th the Clinch County Commission passed a resolution](#) opposing the strip mine and supporting the Okefenokee Swamp, including the UNESCO World Heritage Site bid. This follows [Echols County on August 3rd](#) and [Valdosta on September 11, 2021](#). WWALS members are working on more to add to [those passed by other counties and cities](#). Clinch County also set aside \$50,000 as a cash match for a grant for a Dark Sky Observatory on the Suwannee River in the county.



Right to Clean Water. Florida registered voters, please [sign and circulate the petition](#).

Sewage. Adel had [two small sewage spills during Hurricane Idalia](#). Valdosta and Quitman had none.

Water Quality Testing. September started [filthy upstream](#) and ended [mostly clean](#). A record six new testers [trained by Gretchen Quarterman](#) joined: Debbie Smith, Little River @ 122 - Folsom Bridge; Joanne Tremblay, Santa Fe River; Kristin Rubin, Santa Fe River; Treva Ellison, Bear Creek (Adel) and Little River near Reed Bingham SP; Russ Tatum, Withlacoochee at his property FL 6; Reina Lingle, Suwannee downstream at Branford and Royal Springs. To get trained, fill out this form: <https://wwals.net/?p=47084>

Grants Committee. Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman [presented slides](#) to the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Planning Council about an application with Valdosta State University Geosciences Professor Can Denizman for a GA-EPD Seed Grant to find and fix contamination sources upstream from Valdosta on the Withlacoochee River, Cat Creek, plus the Alapaha River.

SRWMD. [Send your comments](#) on the North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan by October 6th.

Trash. We sent Valdosta two trash trap vendor quotes on August 24th. Since Hurricane Idalia, we have heard nothing back.

Troupville River Camp and Nature Park. One Valdosta-Lowndes is in organizational and fundraising mode. No GOSP grant application this year.

PR Committee. Suwannee Riverkeeper was on [WKUB FM](#) twice, and talk921.com once, about WWALS River Revue and Okefenokee.

Membership Committee. Consider \$10 per month as a [regular donor](#). Plus then we wouldn't have to remind you to renew!

Kayak Raffle: Vibe Sea Ghost 130: Tickets: \$10 each or \$50 for six. <https://wwals.net/?p=61511> Raffle drawing November 27, 2023.

The Outings Committee schedules outings months in advance. Suggest your favorite river section. WWALS canceled several outings due to Hurricane Idalia, but Shirley Kokidko organized [a well-received morning Banks Lake paddle](#) on September 4th.

Upcoming Outings and Events, 2023

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Fri.-Sat. Oct. 6-7, all day | Hahira Honeybee Festival with Parade, WLRWT |
| Sun., Oct. 8, 6-8 PM | WWALS Quarterly Board Meeting , online via zoom, All Rivers |
| Sat., Oct. 14, 9 AM-1 PM | Langdale Park-Sugar Creek Chainsaw Cleanup , Withlacoochee R. |
| Fri., Oct. 20, 9 AM-1 PM | Langdale Park Withlacoochee River Cleanup |
| Sat., Oct. 21, 9 AM-4 PM | Skillet Fest, Quitman, GA, WLRWT |
| Sat., Oct. 28, 5:40-7:45 PM | Banks Lake Full Hunter's Moon Paddle , Lakeland, GA, ARWT |
| Sat.-Sun., Nov. 4-5, all day | Okefenokee Floyd's Island Campout , pending reservations, Suwannee River |
| Sat., Nov. 11, 9 AM-5 PM | Alapaha Station Celebration Festival, ARWT |
| Mon., Nov. 27, 4:30-6:40 PM | Banks Lake Full Beaver Moon Paddle , Lakeland, GA, ARWT |
| Mon., Nov. 27, 4:30 PM | Kayak Raffle Drawing , All Rivers |
| Fri.-Sun., Dec. 8-10 | Campfire Cooking at Griffis Fish Camp and Suwannee River paddle |
| Wed., Dec. 27, 4:30-5:15 PM | Banks Lake Full Cold Moon Paddle , Lakeland, GA, ARWT |
| Sat., Mar. 2, 8 AM-4 PM | Chairman & Mayor's Paddle: Langdale-Troupville, Withlacoochee R. |

Check out [Outings and Events](#) for more details. <https://wwals.net/outings/>



Hahira Honeybee Festival 2022



WWALS Langdale Park to Sugar Creek Chainsaw Cleanup
Withlacoochee River, Lowndes County, GA 2023-10-14

