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IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Birds and Fun at the 7th Annual Georgia's Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival**

JEKYLL ISLAND, GA. (September 8, 2009) – Fall is here. With cooler temperatures, it is time to bring out the binoculars. It is the perfect time for the seventh annual Georgia's Colonial Coast Birding and Nature Festival, set for October. 8-12 on Jekyll Island.

The birds are coming to coastal Georgia. The migrants are passing through on their way south. Many summer birds still linger, some of our winter birds are arriving and it all peaks in mid-October. For the last six years, more than 200 bird species have been spotted during the week of the festival.

The festival offers a wide selection of nature-related field trips, workshops and seminars for birders, photographers and general nature enthusiasts, from beginners to experts. Many field trips are on the DNR's Colonial Coast Birding Trail and are led by field biologists, who are working in the area. You may register on line at [www.coastalgeorgiabirding.org](http://www.coastalgeorgiabirding.org).

On that Friday afternoon, workshop topics include "Secrets of Digiscoping," "Simplifying Sparrow Identification" and "Jammin' with a birdJam iPod." Saturday-afternoon seminars vary from "Going Native: Planting for Biodiversity" to "Birds of Georgia". Also, "Twittering for the Birds" will show you how bird watching and conservation are now working in the twenty-first century.

From 4-7:30 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, there will be a lot of excitement at the festival's Rookery, an interactive exhibit area in Atlantic Hall at the Jekyll Island Convention Center. Participants can try out the latest in high-tech toys for birders, discover which binoculars are best for them with help from the top optic experts in North America, and select from a variety of unique birdfeeders, wildlife art and photography. All exhibit hall activities are open to the public at no charge.

Saturday offers a treat for families, teachers and children of all ages: a special nature day on Jekyll Island. Nature day passports are available at the Rookery. Most activities are free or require only a modest charge. Explore Georgia's coast. Learn why birds are on the beach. Find and identify animal tracks. There will be short marsh, beach and butterfly walks. See hawks and falcons from Georgia Southern University's Lamar Q. Ball Jr. Raptor Center on display at the Rookery, and watch a hawk fly over your head during flight shows scheduled for 10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Saturday.

Short bird walks for beginners will leave the Convention Center hourly starting at 1:00 p.m. and the last one is at 3:00 p.m. Saturday. For those visiting Sunday, there will be a nature walk through the dunes, a Big Sit in Jekyll Campground and an "owl prowl" at Laura S. Walker State Park.

Don Kroodsma, regarded as ornithology's dean of bird song and an expert birder, will be the keynote speaker at the banquet Saturday. After a South Georgia banquet of Wild Georgia shrimp and grits, settle back and prepare to be led into "The Singing Life of Birds." Dr. Kroodsma may be a top-notch scientist but he is also an excellent story teller.

So mark your calendars, pack the kids into the car and come explore the magnificent Georgia coast. Visit [www.coastalgeorgiabirding.org](http://www.coastalgeorgiabirding.org) or call 1-877-4JEKYLL (453-5955) for a complete schedule, fees and other information. On-line registration has begun and will end Sept. 25. You may drop by the Jekyll Island Convention Center during the festival October 8-12 to sign up for the remaining field trips seminars and workshop as well as explore the interactive exhibit area Friday and Saturday.