

Audubon News

January 2003

A publication of the Mecklenburg Audubon

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The Wandering Birder: *Beautiful Belize*

Now that the cold weather has set in our thoughts have turned to warmer climes. Especially places with lots of birds. Being cooped up also makes us yearn for wild places far and near. That's why we reserve our January meeting to spotlight places our members have been and would like to go even if it's only vicariously. Yes, that means Member's 'slides' night as well as our annual Pot Luck.

Chris Baldwin will anchor our photographic tour by sharing with us about his trip to Belize. As he puts it - he's not an expert but he sure had a great time! And he wants to share that with others. The rest of you are charged with bringing slides, photographs, videos*, etc. to the meeting so the rest of us can droole over the great places you have been. Pictures do not have to be specifically about birds. Scenery, other animals, plants, etc. are fair game. Your new grandchild probably should wait for another day.

Everyone is also encouraged to come early at 6:30 PM for a potluck dinner. Bring all the leftovers from the holidays if they're still edible. This is a great time to meet people and get caught up on everyone's travels.

Please note the January meeting will be a week later than usual-**January 9th**. The MAS board thought we would be too hungover to meet on the 2nd. Or at least still out of town enjoying the holidays.

So join us on Thursday, January 9th at 6:30 PM in the fellowship hall of the Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church at 920 Sharon Amity Rd. Bring your pictures and your appetite!

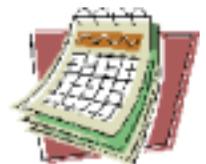
* Please let me know if you have video so I can remember to bring a video player.

**MONTHLY MEETING
WILL BE ON
THURSDAY
JANUARY 9TH.**

**POTLUCK AT 6:30 PM
PROGRAM AT 7:30 PM**



ACTIVITIES CALENDAR



- Sat. 12/28 – Charlotte Christmas Count [Full Day]
- Sat. 1/4 – Pee Dee NWR Christmas Count [Full Day]
- Thu. 1/9 – Beautiful Belize [Members slides and Potluck Meeting]
- Sat. 1/11 – Winter at the Beach [Huntington Beach Field Trip]
- Sat. 1/25 – Windsor Park and SE Charlotte [1/2 day Field Trip]
- Thu. 2/6 – Four Holes Swamp [Monthly meeting]
- Sat. 2/8 – Local Field Trip [1/2 day]
- Sat. 2/22 – Swamp Stomp [Four Holes Swamp Field Trip]
- Thu. 3/6 – Amazing Amphibians [Monthly Meeting]

For additional activities and information go to <http://meckbirds.org>



Field Trips

Saturday, December 28: Charlotte Christmas Count

The granddaddy of local counts, this circle still encompasses a surprising variety of habitat considering suburban sprawl which has taken over much of the area. There are still patches of woods, ponds, lakes, streams and open fields which turn up a interesting variety of resident and wintering species. In the last 5 years we have averaged around 90 species. A remarkable number considering the wholesale loss of habitat over the past 20 years which just proves the tenacity of the birds. Although this is an all day event if you can only participate in the morning or afternoon you are more than welcome.

Since fast food establishments (and warmth) will be just around the corner packing a lunch is optional although a thermos of coffee never hurt. There

will be a tally up dinner at Wing Haven 5:30 PM. Just bring your appetites and good birding stories. Too assure even and complete coverage of the area those who wish to participate should contact Wayne Covington at 704-362-1774 or WayneCovington@hotmail.com.

Saturday, January 4: Pee Dee NWR Christmas Count

The Pee Dee Christmas Count is a great way to start the year birding. Every year it produces surprises. Last year it was turkey tracks in the snow and lots of sparrows. Another sight to behold is seeing the ducks take off in the morning or watching them come back in at dusk. Because of the wide variety of habitat and its central location we usually have a pretty good list of birds including Bald Eagles, Tundra Swans, and lots and lots of sparrows and ducks.

If you want to carpool, meet at the McDonalds on Independence and Idlewild at 6 AM. Otherwise meet at the Pee Dee Maintenance Building [at the main entrance off Rt. 52] at 7 AM. Lunch will be provided but you will

want to wear lots of layers and bring snack foods and something hot to drive while you are out in the field. If you want to be part of this exciting count contact Judy Walker at 704-537-8181 or birdwalker@mac.com.

Saturday, January 11: Huntington Beach St. Park, SC

Although January is often cold and dreary, Mecklenburg Audubon Society's annual field trip to Huntington Beach State Park in South Carolina is always well worth braving the elements! A walk down the beach to the jetty can be cold and windy but you'll most likely get to see gannets, piping plovers and sometimes a flock of snow buntings! We can expect to see lots of ducks, shore birds and hopefully a few rare species like longspurs, an eider or oldsquaw.

Bring warm clothes and lunch. Since most participants stay for the weekend, we will plan to go out to dinner on Saturday night. At dinner we will plan where we will go on Sunday. A favorite and inexpensive Mom & Pop motel in Murrel's Inlet is the Brookwood Inn - 843-651-2550. If you have questions or plan to go contact Taylor Piephoff at 704-532-6336 or piephoffT@aol.com.

Saturday, January 25: Windsor Park/SE Mecklenburg

This is a new field trip for MAS. We have been hearing about Windsor Park on MAS-L [our local discussion group] so we thought we would take a morning to investigate and explore some of the other areas in SE Mecklenburg Co. We should see typical winter birds and perhaps a few oddities. You never know when you have a lot of eyes looking interesting things show up.

We will meet the McDonalds at Windsor Square shopping center on Independence Blvd [Rt. 74] at 7:30 AM. We should wind up about noon time. If you are interested in going contact Rob Bierregaard at 704-333-2405 or rbierreg@email.uncc.edu.

Announcing the 6th Annual **GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT** February 14-17, 2003

Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Now that winter has gripped much of the continent, what are our birds doing? Bird populations are dynamic, they are constantly in flux. We want to take a snapshot of North American bird populations and YOU can help us. Everyone's contribution is important. It doesn't matter whether you identify, count, and report the 5 species coming to your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's outing to a wildlife refuge. Your data can help us answer many questions:

- * How will this winter's snow and cold temperatures influence bird populations?
- * Where are the WINTER finches and other irruptive species?
- * Will late winter movements of many SONGBIRD and waterfowl species be as far north as they were last year?

The data that you collect will be combined with Christmas Bird Count and Project FeederWatch data to give us an immense picture of our winter birds. Each year that these data are collected makes them more important and meaningful. So as we see patterns, discover new questions and insights, we'll update you. And we'll ask for your help again.

For information about participating go to www.birdsource.org

Speaking of Backyards...

January is the time to start thinking about what you will plant in your backyard this year. There are a lot of plants you can use to entice wildlife. Here is a abbreviated version of Will Cook's Great Plants for Attracting Birds in Central North Carolina. You can find the complete version along with one for butterflies at (<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook/plants4birds.html>)



Food And Cover Plants

Evergreen trees and shrubs

- Atlantic White-Cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*)
- Holly (*Ilex*). Yaupon (*I. vomitoria*) Japanese Holly (*I. crenata*) American Holly (*I. Opaca*)
- Eastern Red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
- ☆Wax Myrtle, Southern Bayberry (*Morella Myrica cerifera*)
- Pine (*Pinus* spp.) Loblolly Pine (*P. taeda*) Longleaf Pine (*P. palustris*)
- Carolina Laurel cherry (*Prunus caroliniana*)

Deciduous trees and shrubs

- Maples (*Acer*). Native Red Maple (*A. rubrum*) Southern Sugar Maple (*A. barbatum*) Chalk Maple (*A. leucoderme*). Avoid the messy Silver Maple (*A. saccharinum*)
- River Birch (*Betula nigra*)
- Hackberry, Sugarberry (*Celtis* spp.)
- Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Holly (*Ilex* spp.) Possumhaw (*I. decidua*) Winterberry (*I. verticillata*) Mountain Winterberry (*I. montana*.)
- Sweetgum. (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
- ☆Apple, Crabapple. (*Malus* spp.)
- Red Mulberry. (*Morus rubra*)
- ☆Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)
- Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
- Oak (*Quercus* spp.) White Oak (*Q. alba*) Willow Oak (*Q. phellos*). Avoid the exotic Sawtooth Oak (*Q. acutissima*)
- Blueberry. (*Vaccinium* spp)
- Viburnum. (*Viburnum* spp.) Downy Arrowwood (*V. rafinesquianum*) Rusty Blackhaw (*V. rufidulum*)

Woody Vines

- Carolina Jessamine, Carolina Yellow-Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*)
- Virginia-Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

Herbaceous Plants

- Coreopsis, Tickseed (*Coreopsis* spp.)
- Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea* spp.)
- Common Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*)

Hummingbird Nectar Plants

Trees

- Red Buckeye. (*Aesculus pavia*)

Woody Vines

- Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*)
- Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*)
- ☆Trumpet Honeysuckle, Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

Shrubs

- ☆Gregg's Sage, Texas Sage, Autumn Sage (*Salvia greggii*)
- Small-leaved Sage, Baby Sage (*Salvia microphylla*)
- Mountain Sage (*Salvia regla*)

Herbaceous Plants

- Red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- Jewelweed, Spotted Touch-me-not (*Impatiens capensis*)
- Cypressvine. (*Ipomoea quamoclit*)
- Standing-Cypress (*Ipomopsis rubra*)
- ☆Cardinal-Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- Scarlet Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*)
- Beard-tongue (*Penstemon* spp.)
- Scarlet Sage, Tropical Sage, Blood Sage (*Salvia coccinea*)
- Galeana Red Sage (*Salvia darcy*)
- ☆Pineapple Sage (*Salvia elegans*)
- ☆Guarani Sage, Blue Brazilian Sage, Anise(-scented) Sage (*Salvia guaranitica*)
- Cedar Sage (*Salvia roemeriana*)
- Red Salvia, Scarlet Sage (*Salvia splendens* (modern cultivars))
- Van Houtte's Sage. (*Salvia splendens* 'vanhouttei')

Good cover/food plants to AVOID

- Mimosa Tree, Silk tree (*Albizia julibrissin*)
- Oriental Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)
- Autumn-Olive (*Elaeagnus* spp.)
- Wintercreeper, Climbing Euonymus (*Euonymus fortunei*)
- Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Sericea, Chinese Bush-Clover (*Lespedeza cuneata*)
- Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*)
- Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)
- Redtips (*Photinia* spp.)

Board Members

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Mecklenburg Audubon is a chapter of National Audubon. Meetings are held at Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church, 920 N. Sharon Amity Rd. on the first Thursday of each month, September–May at 7:30 PM.



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ATTENTION!!!!

**THIS MONTH'S
MEETING WILL BE ON**

**THURSDAY,
JANUARY 9TH.**

Join Now

Important: Please use this form for new membership or add our chapter code [R50 7XCH] to your renewal the renewal form you receive in the mail. this will ensure our chapter receives membership dues reimbursement from National Audubon.

National Audubon Membership

1 year - \$20 Senior [62+] - \$15 Student [full-time] - \$15

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