



Audubon News

Volume 17, Issue 9

P.O. Box 221093 Charlotte, NC 28222

May 2012

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, May 3, 2012 • 7:30 PM

What's inside

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Upcoming Events

- 05/05 Latta Park
- 05/19 Beginning Bird Walk
- 05/19 Carolina Sandhills NWR
- 05/25 Anne Springs Close Grnwy.
- 06/07 Picnic

2012 Election Slate

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | Bill Duston |
| <input type="radio"/> | Chris Hanna |
| <input type="radio"/> | Jill Palmer |
| <input type="radio"/> | Jim Pugh |



Who's New?

MARCIA HOWDEN
KELLY MOORE

Take a break from studying those incoming Warbler songs and come listen to another prominent forest sound you may encounter...Cicadas!

For MAS's May meeting, our own Dr. Ken Kneidel, will guide you through a lab activity focused on the identification of cicadas common in the Charlotte area. We're going to change up our meeting format a bit from the usual lecture style to a science lab activity. With dried specimens in hand, magnifying glass, dichotomous key, and a power point at your disposal, you should leave with some solid skill in identifying our summer and fall cicadas by sight and sound. Come out and see the Cicadas like the birds do. Up-close and personal!

So take a trip back to school and join us on Thursday, May 3rd at the Tyvola Senior



Center (2225 Tyvola Road.) at 7:15 PM for light refreshment and chit-chat with the program starting at 7:30 PM.v



For complete details go to <http://goo.gl/4K442>

Audubon North Carolina and the Cape Fear Audubon Society are pleased to welcome all members, friends, and bird enthusiasts to the **2012 Annual Meeting** being held from **June 1-3** in beautiful **Wilmington, North Carolina**.

One of North Carolina's most historic cities, Wilmington is located at the center of the Cape Fear region which includes Pender, New Hanover, and Brunswick Counties. This area is one of North Carolina's birding and botanical hotspots with some of the highest concentrations of bird and plant species in the state. In a *Birder's*

Guide to Coastal North Carolina, John Fussell states that over 400 species have been identified along our coast. A high percentage of those can be found in the Cape Fear area, which boasts 12 Important Bird Areas and 20 sites on the NC Birding Trail. Black Skimmers and Least Terns are easily viewed nesting on several area beaches, while great expanses of tidal salt marsh provide ample opportunity to see wading birds like Tri-colored and Little Blue Herons, and shorebirds such as Clapper Rails,

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Field Trips

All Mecklenburg Audubon Field Trips are free and open to the public. Directions for all trips can be found on the Mecklenburg Audubon website - meckbirds.org. Click on Field Trips. Please remember to contact the trip leaders several days before the trip. If you don't, you may not receive information about last minute changes or cancellations. Also, if they don't know you are coming, they might leave without you!!

Latta Park (Dilworth)

1/2 Day • Easy

Latta Park in Dilworth is a real gem in spring migration. It is possible to have a 15 warbler day, with surprises like Wilson's or Nashville. Add to this 4 or 5 thrushes, 3 or 4 vireos, scarlet tanager, rose-breasted grosbeak, both orioles and many others, and it's hard to stay away. We will have many trips to this birdy park in April and May. You will find birders there almost every day from mid-April to mid-May. We will be leading 'official' walks which will meet at 8:30 AM on the dates listed below. The meeting spot will be at the parking lot on East Park Ave. between Winthrop Ave. and Springfield Ave.

Saturday, May 5th: Contact - Ron Clark (waxwing@bellsouth.net)

Wednesday, May 9th: Contact - Dave Lovett (birdsallot@webtv.net)

Saturday, May 19th: Beginner's Bird Walk.

1/2 Day • Easy • Contact: Sally Miller (sallyart@bellsouth.net)

We'll meet at 8:30 AM at McAlpine Creek Greenway Park to learn the basics of birding. Binoculars will be provided if you need them.

Saturday, May 19th: Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge.

Full Day • Easy • Contact: Ron Clark (waxwing@bellsouth.net)

This all-day trip will be a drive through the refuge with walking stops along the way. This is a good area for red-cockaded woodpecker, Bachman's sparrow and, hopefully, lark sparrow. It's mostly open fields, ponds and pine forests. Bring lunch. We'll meet at 6:30 AM behind the McDonald's in Windsor Square on Independence Blvd. We'll be back in Charlotte by 6:00 PM.

Wednesday, May 23rd: Anne Springs Greenway.

1/2 Day • Moderate • Contact: Dave Lovett (birdsallot@webtv.net)

Meet at 8:30 AM at the entrance off Hwy 21. The habitat is fields, lake and wooded trails with some hills. There is a \$3 entrance fee.



Bachman's Sparrow



Red-cockaded Woodpecker



Annual Picnic Thursday June 7th

Location: TBA
Time: 6:00 PM - ????

KEY TO PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY

Easy - Trails are level to slight grades usually paved. .5-1.5 miles of walking;
Moderate - Trails can be uneven with some hills. 1-2.5 miles of walking;
Strenuous - Trails vary greatly. 2.5+ miles of walking;
* - Trails are handicapped accessible.

Maps to meeting spots can be found at

meckbirds.org/trips/trips.html



All these birds were killed by building collisions in downtown Winston-Salem. Common Yellowthroat (center) is one of the most common victims of building collisions. Photo by David Disher.

What will you be doing at 6:30 AM on Sunday, April 29th? Well a group of folks from Mecklenburg Audubon will be joined by two members of Forsythe Audubon will be on a bird walk along streets of center city Charlotte. They will be looking for migrants just as they were the day before during the spring count. But unfortunately the migrants they are looking for are ones that won't make it back to their breeding grounds. This group will be conducting the first ever inventory of bird fatalities caused by lighted high-rise buildings in Charlotte.

It is the first step in establishing a 'Lights Out' program for Charlotte. Spearheaded by Jill Palmer, it is hoped that MAS will be able to convince building managers in center city to turn off building lights during crucial migration times. They folks from Forsythe Audubon started their program last year. The information below is what they have uncovered for Winston-Salem's center so far. Charlotte is a much larger city and will pose different challenges but our fellow Auduboner's are willing to help us get started. If you are interested in helping out contact Jill Palmer.



Hermit Thrushes are particularly susceptible to building collisions. Cape May and Yellow-throated are among 15 warbler species killed by collisions in Winston-Salem so far. Photo by David Disher

From Forsythe Audubon's Web Site

Every spring and fall, millions of birds journey along the Atlantic Flyway north to breeding grounds and back south to their winter homes. For millions of years, the moon and stars have helped them find their way. For just 100 years, artificial light, especially from cities, has steered them off course.

Chicago and New York have led the way in darkening their night skies for migrating

found 50 dead and injured birds in a single month during fall 2011.

Most collision victims are migratory birds - warblers, thrushes and vireos - beloved for their bright colors and beautiful songs. Many of these species already are in serious decline. Locally, fewer than ten percent of birds that collided with buildings were year-round residents such as Northern Cardinals and Eastern Towhees.

LIGHTS OUT!!! For the Birds

birds. Our city is taking action with Lights Out Winston-Salem, started by Forsyth Audubon and Audubon North Carolina in spring 2012.

Turn out the lights and give the more than 150 species of birds that pass through Winston-Salem the dark skies they need for safe flight. In doing so, you will save money and reduce our city's use of fossil fuels. And we will all see more stars. Bird-friendly skies are friendlier for people, too.

The problem:

Most birds migrate at night. Artificial lights attract and disorient birds, leading to collisions with buildings. Collisions kill anywhere from 100 million to 1 billion birds a year in the United States. Experts say that building collisions are second only to habitat destruction in human-related causes of bird mortality. This problem is not limited to large cities: during morning surveys of 13 downtown Winston-Salem buildings, Audubon volunteers

Become part of the solution:

Research in Chicago documented an 83-percent reduction in bird collisions when the lights were turned out. Not only will there be fewer collisions at a darkened building, but also the urban glow that attracts birds in the first place will diminish.

Turn out the lights when you leave your office for the day, and ask your employer to turn out the lights during spring and fall migration.

Learn more about:

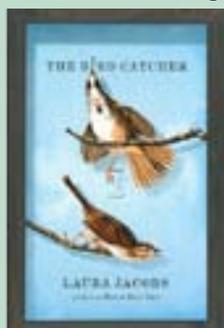
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (<http://goo.gl/I6JVy>)
- Fatal Light Awareness Program (<http://www.flap.org/>)
- National Audubon Society (<http://lightsout.audubon.org/>)
- New York City Audubon (<http://goo.gl/TZqnF>)
- American Bird Conservancy (<http://goo.gl/xz1ag>)
- Facts about bird-building collisions (<http://goo.gl/DUIV6>)

Summer Reading



***Bird Catcher*, by Laura Jacobs (St. Martin's Press)**

Regulations such as those mentioned in the above review actually bear on the plot climax of *The Bird Catcher*, a novel by Laura Jacobs about Manhattan, love, birds, and art. Margret, a Manhattan



“arts” woman, dresses windows at Saks and associates with the gallery scene at night. But she also shares her lifelong habit of birding with her husband, a professor at Columbia. Both

author and character share a birder’s (and an artist’s) mind. Margret on field guides: “Roger Tory Peterson’s was the guide she grew up with, but the drawing was static. And though she loved the charming Golden Guide, its Blackburnian looked like a dutiful student. National Geo’s male was brilliantly colored but forlorn. Kaufman, a new guide with photos, was invaluable for jizz, but it was Pough, a guide from the forties, which got the closest.”

When her best friend, an alpha-female gallery owner, suggests a show, Margret becomes an overnight success—and, of course, a violator of federal wildlife law. I won’t tell you more about the tragicomic denouement, but Margret, and even her stuffed birds, come through well. Read this fine novel, even if books about Manhattan society aren’t your “thing”; it is full of treasures. (Complete review at <http://goo.gl/12WXa>)

When the days get too hot for man or bird try relaxing with these books reviewed by Stephen J. Bodio in *Living Bird*.

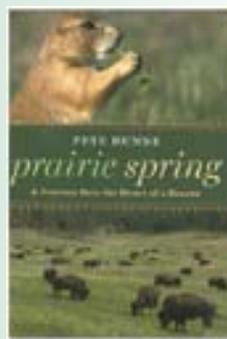
***Bird Coloration*, by Geoffrey E. Hill (National Geographic)**

Bird Coloration starts off boldly. Across from a stunning full-page photograph of a handsome bird with a cape of iridescent multi-colored hackles, the caption announces, “There



are no orange, green, or blue pigments in the feathers of this Nicobar pigeon.” Hill announces the book’s aims: to tell us the whats and whys of bird coloration, and “to communicate in prose accessible to non-scientists what scientists know about the coloration of birds.” (Much later, he raises the possibility that color may have “no function at all,” though he more or less manages to shoot that one down.) (Complete review at <http://goo.gl/6fcgk>)

***Prairie Spring*, by Pete Dunne (Houghton Mifflin)**



Prairie Spring: A Journey into the Heart of a Season is a typical Pete Dunne book—its effortless and breezy manner looks casual but deals with vital matters. His rationale is a perfect example: “So if your ambition

is to write a book to entice a strange audience to explore an exciting, overlooked, and now alien environment (i.e., the natural world that surrounds and supports us) and you are searching for some common ground to give them a familiar footing, where might you start? Please say ‘the seasons.’ And which season would you choose?” (Complete review at <http://goo.gl/M8dkz>)

***Feathers: the Evolution of a Natural Miracle*, by Thor Hanson (Basic Books)**

Book subjects come in waves; the publishing world is now full of books on feathers, but this may well be the best. Thor Hanson, a field biologist, claims that the subject chose him. If so, it chose well; I love nothing better than scientists

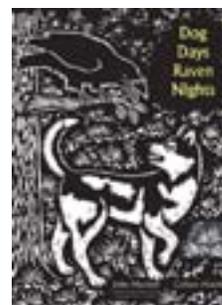


who can write. Hanson’s book covers every aspect of feathers—evolutionary, structural and functional, and finally cultural, showing

all the ways that humans as well as birds use them. He ranges in time from the lithographic shale of the Jurassic to the present, and geographically from China to Maine to Las Vegas. (Complete review at - <http://goo.gl/S16Ny>)

***Dog Days, Raven Nights*, by John & Colleen Marzluff (Yale University)**

Dog Days, Raven Nights is a delightful, slightly schizoid book that attempts to answer the question that it poses on virtually the first page: “Can you make a living from the love of natural science?” Or maybe, can you still? The schizoid



nature of the book comes from its three inextricably braided themes: the Marzluffs’ research into the behavior of ravens in Maine, conducted under the direction of Bernd

Heinrich; life in Maine; and, believe it or not, sled dog racing, Colleen’s diversion from the stresses of raven work. (Complete review at <http://goo.gl/3y2Su>)

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ANC Annual Meeting

Rails, White Ibis, and Willets. In the maritime thickets and forests fringing the marshes, Painted Buntings may be seen and heard during the summer.

The meeting will be headquartered at the Hampton Inn Medical Park, located at 2320 South 17th Street, Wilmington, NC. You must make a reservation with the hotel to book your room.

Annual meeting attendees will be able to participate in a variety of field trips and events throughout the weekend.

Cape Fear Audubon Society Reception

Cape Fear Audubon Society will host a wine and beer reception with light snacks Friday night, 6-8 p.m. at Halyburton Park Education Center. Wilmington's first nature park, Halyburton is also a popular spot for weddings and receptions. The park is centered on a small Carolina Bay (unfortunately, now dry) and has several walking trails. Feeders are maintained to attract birds throughout the year. Weather permitting, some of the reception guests may move out onto the patio overlooking the park. Dinner will be on your own and your registration packet will contain information about restaurant options near the hotel.

Photography workshop: Mark Buckler is the Director of the Donal C. O'Brien, Jr. Sanctuary and Audubon Center at Pine Island and an accomplished photographer. He will take participants outdoors and provide tips on how to improve their nature photography. Participants will meet in the lobby of the Hampton Inn.

Amazing landscapes: If you've waded in the surf at Bird Island—explored the dense canopy of live oaks at Springer's Pont on Ocracoke—enjoyed a jazz or gospel concert at Airlie Gardens—paddled down the tributaries of the Neuse—listened to the whisper of the longleaf at Pettiford Creek at the Croatan—found fresh produce at Poplar Grove's Farmer's Market—strolled down the Morehead City waterfront—

or watched the incredible Venus flytrap at the Brunswick Nature Park—then you've enjoyed one of the special places the Coastal Land Trust has helped to save.

On Friday, June 1, 1-2 PM at Halyburton Park Education Center, Camilla Herlevich, CEO of the Coastal Land Trust and the first director of Audubon North Carolina, will share her success in preserving some of the unique environments found in coastal North Carolina. The results of these efforts are an amazing variety of habitats for birds.

Long Leaf Pine Exhibit: The Cape Fear Museum was originally established to house civil war artifacts, but since its inception in 1898, it has broadened its mission to include the natural history and culture of the Lower Cape Fear region. Land of the Long Leaf Pine is one of their major permanent exhibits and the Museum Director, Ruth Haas, will provide additional information about the importance of the Long Leaf Pine to the Cape Fear area.

Be a Good Egg, Share the Beach: The goal of the Be a Good Egg, Share the Beach project is to educate beachgoers about their impact on beach-nesting birds like Least Terns, Black Skimmers, and American Oystercatchers. From April through August, thousands of birds nest on the bare sand of many North Carolina beaches, usually at inlets. These scrappy survivors face many threats, including severe weather and predators. One person or dog walking through a nesting area will cause the adults to fly off their nests, exposing their chicks and eggs to predators and severe temperatures. Just a few minutes of exposure can cause an entire colony to fail. Volunteers will show beach visitors the nests through scopes and staff a table with educational materials.

Reception and awards banquet: Join us for a reception prior to the banquet dinner on the patio outside of the Azalea Room at the Hampton Inn Medical Park Hotel. A specialty drink, beer, and non alcoholic beverages will be served. We apologize that we can not offer red wine this year due to hotel rules.



At the banquet and award ceremony, Heather Starck, Executive Director of Audubon North Carolina, will give a presentation on the new strategic plan for the National Audubon Society and how chapters, state offices, and the national organization will become One Audubon.

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