



Whistler

The Audubon Society of Forsyth County Newsletter

October-November 2011

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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 4, 7:00 pm	Board Meeting — Arbor Acres Club House
October 8, 8:00 am	Second Saturday bird walk – Walnut Bottoms Preserve at Bethania (Leader: Shelley Rutkin)
October 15	Fall Wildflower Day Trip — Blue Ridge Parkway, meet at Thruway (Leader: Lisa Gould)
October 25, 7:00 pm	Chapter Meeting — Bethabara Park Visitor Center Dr. Mark Stanback, Davidson College "Brown-headed Nuthatch Declines: Are Bluebirds to Blame?"
November 1, 7:00 pm	Board Meeting — Arbor Acres Club House
November 12, 9:00 am	Second Saturday bird walk — Horizons Park (Leader: Craig McCleary)
November 12	Start of Project Feeder Watch (see below)
November 22, 7:00 pm	Chapter Meeting — Bethabara Park Visitor Center Curtis Smalling, NC Audubon "The Atlantic Flyway: Birds from North Carolina to Nicaragua and Beyond"

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH

Project FeederWatch is operated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. It's a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. Participants periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance.

Anyone with an interest in birds can participate, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs.

There is a \$15 annual participation fee (\$12 for Cornell Lab members), which covers materials, staff support, web design, data analysis, and a year-end report (*Winter Bird Highlights*). Project FeederWatch is supported almost entirely by these participation fees. All participants receive a Research Kit, which contains instructions, a bird identification poster, a wall calendar, a resource guide to bird feeding, and a tally sheet—everything you need to start counting your birds! Kits are shipped about two weeks after you sign up. You provide the feeder(s) and seed.

For more information about Project FeederWatch and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, see www.birds.cornell.edu. This is a great opportunity to engage in some citizen-science!



SWIFT WATCH ATTRACTS MORE THAN 100 PEOPLE

This year we moved Swift Watch to Northwest Middle School, on the north side of town on Murray Road. Scouts checked out many downtown roosts, but none compared to the more than 8,000 swifts roosting at the school. More than 100 people, including many families with children, came out to enjoy the spectacle on September 15.

Kim Brand

LIGHTS OUT FOR MIGRATING BIRDS

As “Bird’s Eye View” columnists, Ron Morris and I regularly receive notes about how to stop birds hitting house windows or what to do with a bird that has been injured in a window strike. Dr. Daniel Klem at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, has been studying bird-glass collisions for 35 years. He estimates that nearly one billion birds each year die from these impacts. .

Just think what it must be like for migrating birds trying to navigate through one of our big cities filled with towering glass skyscrapers. The problem only increases on overcast and foggy nights, when the birds are pushed down to lower altitudes. The lights of tall buildings work as a beacon drawing the birds to them, and they never see the glass until it is too late.

Members of the Chicago Audubon Society began trying to do something about it. The Windy City was the first U.S. city to dim the lights of tall buildings to save birds’ lives. Under a “lights out” program, building managers turn off decorative lights at tall buildings during spring and fall migration. In addition, volunteer “bird collision monitors” rescue injured birds

and take them to rehabilitators. Audubon, the city, the Building Owners and Managers Association, and the Field Museum work together on the program, which now covers about 25 of the city’s skyscrapers.

New York City Audubon also has begun a “lights out” program to address an estimated 90,000 fatal bird-glass collisions in our country’s largest city. In New York, this fall’s program operates during September and October. Susan Elbin, New York City Audubon’s Director of Conservation and Science has pointed out that, in addition to protecting migrating birds, building owners can reduce their energy costs and carbon footprint.

Winston-Salem has only a handful of tall buildings, but they still present dangers to our feathered travelers. Co-founder of Project Safe Flight in New York City, and now a Winston-Salem resident, Allison Sloan found building-killed American Redstart, Worm-eating Warbler, Ovenbird, and Whippoorwill in Winston-Salem during spring migration this year. If you would be interested in helping with a “lights out” effort right here in the “City of the Arts,” let us know. To read more about the Chicago and New York programs, go to www.lightsout.audubon.org and www.nycaudubon.org.

Phil Dickinson



Our Mission

**To conserve and restore natural ecosystems—
focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats
for the benefit of humanity and North Carolina’s
biological diversity**

Audubon Society of
Forsyth County
P.O. Box 15111

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Visit us on the web at www.forsythaudubon.org

The Audubon Society of Forsyth County

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BIRDS DO IT...



Phil Dickinson

If you are not yet a member, we invite you to join. Membership in ASFC includes membership in the National Audubon Society and is just \$20 for the first year. Send your check made out to ASFC to: Audubon Society of Forsyth County, P.O. Box 15111, Winston-Salem, NC 27113. Please include your name, email, address and zip code.