



Whistler

The Audubon Society of Forsyth County Newsletter

Winter 2007

Printed on recycled paper 

UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 4 Board meeting, Arbor Acres 7:00 pm
December 8 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Civitan Park 9:00 am
December 29 **CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**
January 8 Board meeting, Arbor Acres 7:00 pm
January 12 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Salem Lake 9:00 am
January 18-21 **WINTER FIELD TRIP, OUTER BANKS (see page 3 for details)**
January 22 Chapter Meeting, Sciworks. David and Susan Disher, Panama Canopy Lodge 7:30 pm (social hour begins at 7:00 pm)
January 26 Miller Park Cleanup, 9:00 am
February 2 Chapter Day, NC Zoological Park
February 5 Board meeting, Arbor Acres 7:00 pm
February 9 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Washington Park 9:00 am
February 15-18 **GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT**
February 26 Chapter Meeting, SciWorks. Curtis Smalling, NC Audubon, IBA's and You 7:30 pm (social hour begins at 7:00 pm)
March 5 Board Meeting, Arbor Acres 7:00 pm
March 9 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Historic Bethabara 9:00 am
March 26 Chapter Meeting, SciWorks. Becky B. Desjardins, NC Museum of Natural Sciences, Birds of the NC Museum of Natural Sciences 7:30 pm (social hour begins at 7:00 pm)

PANAMA CANOPY AND LODGE TRIP MARCH 29 TO APRIL 6

Join fellow ASFC members for a trip to the tropics in the early spring. Frequent chapter speaker and owner of Ventures Birding Tours, Simon Thompson, will be leading this tour. This is a trip for birders and non-birders alike. If you're interested, please contact Susan Jones at sjones@triad.rr.com for more details. And don't miss January's chapter meeting, when David and Susan Disher will present a talk about their own trip to Panama Canopy and Lodge!

WE'RE MAKING A LIST..

and it will be checked twice, after the 108th Christmas Bird Count, scheduled for December 29, 2007. No matter if you're a veteran or beginning birder, ASFC needs **YOU** to help with our annual count. What better way to spend a day than in the field with like minded folks, contributing to citizen science? Contact Linda G. Davis at davisl@mindspring.com or (336) 924-1751, to sign up.

There are locations all around Winston-Salem and Forsyth County that need coverage, and you can usually be assigned to a team of your choice. Final details will be provided ten days prior to the count, including team assignments, forms and plans for the after count dinner. Join us on December 29!

CONSERVATION CORNER

Fourteen ASFC members participated in the Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful "Big Sweep" this fall by picking up trash in Miller Park, with a focus on cleaning litter from the stream corridor. Thanks to Doug Demarest, Bert Hollifield, Pam Wooten, Phil Dickinson, Gene Schepker, Chester Robertson, Sue, Sophie & Randall Rupp, Norwood Lide, Bill Gifford, Myrna Harris & Shelley Rutkin for giving their Saturday morning to this worthwhile project.

Next, I have three conservation topics I'd like to briefly address.

1. The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, aka, The Duck Stamp. I have read several articles that have convinced me this is one of the single most important (and most economical!) ways to further conservation and expansion of important wildlife areas that become refuges for many species of migratory and overwintering birds, not just ducks. Please go to your local post office and purchase a Duck Stamp. They cost only \$15.00 each, and are collectible in themselves. They also serve as a free pass into any national park that charges admission. 98% of the revenue collected goes to secure wetland and grassland habitat in the National Wildlife Refuge System. You might consider purchasing additional stamps as gifts for conservation-minded family and friends.

2. "Saving birds, cup by cup", a recent article in *Bird-Watcher's Digest* refocused my attention on the importance of choosing shade-grown coffee. I'll confess I had not made this a priority, in part because I just hadn't educated myself on the stakes involved. Shade-grown coffee plantations not only practice good environmental stewardship, they provide high quality wintering habitat for songbirds. It is easier and easier to find shade-grown coffee. We just purchased some at Harris Teeter, and of course specialty stores such as Whole Foods carry it. Many churches distribute fair-trade, shade-grown coffee. There is also a special source here in North Carolina, Counter Culture Coffee in Durham. I was only vaguely aware of this company until recently, when co-founder Fred Houk died. He was a birder, and his obituary was posted on carolinabirds. If you take some time to read this link: <http://www.counterulturecoffee.com/>, I think you will be impressed with not only the devotion to quality and the environment that Counter Culture advocates, but the amazing partnerships that they work out with farmers scattered around the globe. There's something good brewing here, and this is one time we can have our coffee and drink it too - confident that we are helping protect bird habitat, maintain family farms, and reward sustainable agricultural techniques by creating demand for shade-grown coffee.

3. Low Impact Development Technologies. The recent Place Properties fight here in Winston-Salem led me to contact my cousin, who is an environmental engineer, to ask about some of the environmental issues involved. In his answer, he pointed me to a website with information that excited me with its potential to revolutionize property development, and make it more of a win-win between people and the environment: <http://www.wbdg.org/design/lidtech.php>. This information is important for anyone interested in maintaining green spaces, particularly in an urban environment. It also holds great hope for controlling storm water runoff, which I think is a huge problem in Winston-Salem. If any of you are in positions of political authority or engage in real estate development, I hope you will take time to seriously consider this "alternative site design strategy." The economic indicators line up with this more environmentally friendly approach, since the more attractive design enhances property values AND is less expensive to implement.

We can do this! Let's advocate Low Impact Development Technologies for our communities!

Ann Robertson

IBA COLLABORATION

The Chapter continues to work with New River and Hanging Rock State Parks as part of the Audubon Important Bird Area (IBA) program. In May, Chapter members conducted a second point count survey at New River State Park, and this summer Bill Gifford, Jeremy Reiskind and Susan Jones offered educational slide presentations to park visitors at Hanging Rock.

AFCS also receives collaborative funds from National Audubon to support its IBA adoptions. Currently, we are working with Audubon NC's Curtis Smalling (who'll be speaking here in February) and New River State Park to develop signage that will inform park visitors about the IBA program. At Hanging Rock, we have agreed to purchase binoculars and field guides for young visitors to the park. We currently are investigating equipment and price options.

Join us for a Christmas Bird Count at Hanging Rock on Saturday, December 15. For details, contact Phil Dickinson or Linda Davis.

OCTOBER DAY TRIP

There were only eight Forsyth Audubon birders for the October 27th day trip to Stone Mountain, but a good time was had by all. As we left the fog behind and approached the park headquarters we were greeted by a clear blue sky and colorful hills. Hiking through the park and driving along the Parkway we didn't have much luck seeing that many different birds. But there were a few good finds, including a great look at a Bald Eagle soaring over highway 21 where we stopped for a break. A few of us went on to Doughton Park and found Golden-crowned Kinglets. There were many "heard" birds, including a Pileated Woodpecker and Eastern Phoebe. Despite the lack of birds it was still a great day for hiking, having a picnic, and enjoying the fall colors.

Don Adamick



Now where is that bird anyway?

CHAPTER MEETINGS

January 22: David and Susan Disher, members of Audubon Society of Forsyth County, "The Canopy Lodge and Tower in Panama." In advance of our trip to Panama, the Dishers will share their experiences and photographs from a recent trip to the Canopy Lodge and Tower in Panama.

February 26: Curtis Smalling, NC Audubon Society's mountain region biologist and director of the IBA program, "IBA's and You." What is an IBA, what impact is it having, and how are we at ASFC contributing with our adopted IBA's?

March 25: Becky B. Desjardins, NC Museum of Natural Sciences, "Birds of the NC Museum of Natural Sciences." The Division of Birds houses preserved specimens of rare, endangered and even some extinct species of birds. The collection is used by scientists from around the globe. Additionally, the staff is actively engaged in research projects involving such species as the Swainson's Warbler and the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Back to the Banks!

Forsyth Audubon is returning to the Outer Banks January 18-21 for the 2008 Winter Trip. In 2006 our intrepid winter birders found 132 species and we are looking forward to another great trip. Included in the itinerary are Alligator River, Pea Island, Mattamuskeet, and Pocosin Lakes NWR's, including Pungo Lake. The 18th will be a travel day and will include a stop at Alligator River on the way to the Outer Banks. Birding on the 19th and 20th will focus on the Outer Banks and the other refuges and the 21st is a return date, with birding along the way as folks desire. That is the plan but we know some cannot get away on the Friday before this weekend holiday and that is okay too; all are welcome any time they can make the trip.

We are reviewing accommodations and have some further checking to do before listing a preference. It looks like most places will give a discount if we can guarantee ten rooms for the weekend. Birders will be responsible for booking their own rooms and there is no obligation to stay at the recommended motel; it's just nice to have everybody together if possible. We'll get more information to you in a couple of weeks. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Don Adamick at dadamick@bellsouth.net or 766-8436.

BEACH DRIVING AT CAPE HATTERAS

Audubon does not want to stop people from driving on the beach at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. However, it does want the Park Service to come up with a plan that will make vehicle access compatible with proper bird and wildlife management. Loggerhead turtles, piping plovers and other species are in decline and need protection.

In 1973, President Nixon directed the National Park Service to develop a plan to regulate beach driving to protect natural resources. Yet, the Park Superintendent recently admitted that his agency has not met its obligations under current regulations. And, in July, a federal judge said that, absent such a plan, all beach driving should be considered illegal.

In October, Audubon North Carolina joined with Defenders of Wildlife and the Southern Environmental Law Center in filing suit to compel the Park Service to come up with a science-based plan. Beach driving is a long-standing tradition in North Carolina, with estimates of up to 2000 cars a day during peak season. Some people fear that environmentalists want to stop all driving on the beach. However, even Audubon staff members drive on the beach. Drivers, sunbathers and wildlife all have rights to enjoy the Seashore.

Phil Dickson

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



Visit us on the web at www.forsythaudubon.org

Audubon Society of
Forsyth County
P.O. Box 15111
Winston-Salem, NC 27113

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The Audubon Society of Forsyth County

2007-2008 CHAPTER BOARD

PIEDMONT TRAIL GUIDE

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Help fund publication of the Piedmont Trail Guide of the North Carolina Birding Trail. It's easy and won't take much from each individual, because \$1 from your pocket results in \$4 for the Trail. The Guide is due for release in spring 2008 and will include several of our local hotspots. Golden Leaf will match dollar-for-dollar whatever the Birding Trail collects. To help the Birding Trail with its end of the bargain, the Carolina Bird Club will match dollar-for-dollar up to \$5,000 contributed by individual birders and other organizations. However, you only have until December 31 to help out. Send your donations to Carolina Bird Club, 6325 Falls of the Neuse Rd., STE9, PMB 50, Raleigh, NC 27615. Write "NCBT Challenge Grant" on your check. The Trail's beautiful 172- page Coastal Plain Guide is now available for \$10 from the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. For more about the Trail, visit www.ncbirdingtrail.org.

MEMBERSHIP

For membership information, please contact Lois Schneider at 768-6645. If you don't wish to join the National Audubon Society, but would like to subscribe to our newsletter, send \$15.00 (make your check payable to ASFC) to: Audubon Society of Forsyth County, P.O. Box 15111, Winston-Salem, NC 27113

Please include your name, address and zip code.