

# Whistler

The Audubon Society of Forsyth County Newsletter

Fall 2007

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 4 Board meeting, Arbor Acres
- September 8 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Reynolda Gardens
- September 15 [Hawk Watch, Pilot Mountain \(through September 30\)](#)
- September 25 Chapter Meeting, SciWorks. Lynn Moseley, "Our Fine Feathered Friends"
- October 2 Board meeting, Arbor Acres
- October 6 [Big Sweep, Miller Park cleanup 9:00 a.m.](#)
- October 13 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Tanglewood Park
- October 14 [The Big Sit, Tanglewood Park](#)
- October 20 One-day field trip, TBA
- October 23 Chapter Meeting, SciWorks. Charlie Brummitt, "Protecting Habitat"

### SEPTEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

On Tuesday, September 25, the Audubon Society of Forsyth County inaugurates a new year of chapter meetings with Dr. Lynn Moseley of Guilford College. Her talk, "Our Fine Feathered Friends," will focus on bird feathers, function, types, colors, plumages, and molts. Join us for this and subsequent talks, at Sciworks, with a social "hour" at 7:00 p.m., and the program start at 7:30.

Details about subsequent programs are provided on page 3 of this newsletter.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The ASFC Winter Field Trip will take place from January 18 to 21, and will include birding at Alligator River, Lake Mattamussett and the Outer Banks. Further details will be posted in the winter newsletter, as well as on the ASFC website ([www.forsythaudubon.org](http://www.forsythaudubon.org)).

### PILOT MOUNTAIN HAWK WATCH

Once again, you can help the Chapter with the study of our local hawk migration. Between September 15 and September 30, we will be collecting data on the birds seen at Pilot Mountain State Park. We will be working with members of the Piedmont Bird Club and the T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society. It is also a great way to meet other members of our birding community.

Last year's renewal of Hawk Watch was a great success, with about 59 participants counting almost 4900 raptors. We need volunteers to sign up for specific time periods during the two-week period. If we get enough people, once or twice for each should provide good coverage. We welcome all experience levels. Contact John Haire at 671-5577, [johnhaire@starpower.net](mailto:johnhaire@starpower.net) or Phil Dickinson at 659-2464, [pdickins@triad.rr.com](mailto:pdickins@triad.rr.com).

## ASFC CALENDAR FOR 2007-2008

Board meetings are at 7:00 p.m. Second Saturday bird-walks begin at 8:00 a.m. between April and October and at 9:00 a.m. between November and March. Chapter meetings have a social time at 7:00 p.m., with business and the program beginning at 7:30 p.m.

September 4	Board meeting, Arbor Acres	January 8	Board Meeting, Arbor Acres (note change to second Tuesday)
September 8	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Reynolda Gardens	January 12	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Salem Lake
September 15	Hawk Watch, Pilot Mountain (through September 30)	January 18-21	Winter Field Trip, Outer Banks
September 25	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks Lynn Moseley, "Our Fine Feathered Friends"	January 22	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks David & Susan Disher, Panama's Canopy Lodge
October 2	Board meeting, Arbor Acres	January 26	Miller Park cleanup, 9:00 a.m.
October 6	Big Sweep, Miller Park cleanup, 9:00 a.m.	February 2	Chapter Day, NC Zoological Park
October 13	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Tanglewood Park	February 5	Board meeting, Arbor Acres
October 14	The Big Sit, Tanglewood Park,	February 9	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Washington Park
October 20	One-day field trip, TBA	February 15-18	Great Backyard Bird Count
October 23	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks Piedmont Land Conservancy	February 26	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks TBA
November 6	Board Meeting, Arbor Acres	March 5	Board Meeting, Arbor Acres
November 10	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Muddy Creek	March 9	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Historic Bethabara
November 10	Start of Project Feeder Watch	March 26	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks TBA
November 27	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks Parker Whitt, West Nile in NC	April 1	Board meeting, Arbor Acres
December 4	Board Meeting, Arbor Acres	April 12	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Miller Park
December 8	Second Saturday Birdwalk, Civitan Park	April 19	Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful Miller Park cleanup, 9:00 a.m.
December 29	Christmas Bird Count	April 22	Chapter Meeting, SciWorks TBA
		April 25-27	Spring Field Trip, A.C.E. Basin, SC
		May 3	Spring Bird Count
		May 6	Board meeting, Arbor Acres

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- May 10 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Reynolda Gardens
- May 16-17 [New River IBA Survey](#)
- May 27 Chapter Meeting, SciWorks TBA
- May 31-June 1 [Audubon NC Meeting, Haw River SP](#)
- June Board meeting, planning for 2008-2009
- June 14 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Tanglewood Park
- July 12 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Bethabara Wetlands
- July 26 [Miller Park cleanup, 9:00 a.m.](#)
- August 5 Board meeting, Arbor Acres
- August 9 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Archie Elledge



**Red-Tailed Hawk**  
**Mike Stewart**

## CHAPTER MEETINGS

October 23 Charlie Brummitt, Piedmont Land Conservancy, "Protecting Habitat." The speaker will describe how the Piedmont Land Conservancy identifies special places and works to protect them, emphasizing wildlife habitat protection. The Conservancy has protected almost 14,000 acres of forest, farmland, riparian buffers and open urban areas since its founding in 1990.

November 27 Parker Whitt, Environmental Health Specialist, NC Department of Natural Resources, "West Nile Virus in NC." An avid birder and breeder of Venezuelan rattlesnakes, the speaker will discuss the impact of West Nile Virus in NC and what we're doing to combat it.

December **no program**

January 22 David and Susan Disher, members of Audubon Society of Forsyth County, "The Canopy Lodge and Tower in Panama." In advance of our ASFC 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 (Important Bird Area) program, "IBA and You." What is an IBA? What impact is it having? How we at ASFC are 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 at the NC Museum 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 of the Division is actively engaged in research projects involving such species as the Swainson's Warbler and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

### **PANAMA CANOPY AND LODGE TRIP** **MARCH 29 TO APRIL 6**

Join fellow ASFC members for a trip to the tropics in 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. More details to follow! If you're interested, contact Susan Jones at [sljones@triad.rr.com](mailto:sljones@triad.rr.com). David and Susan Disher will present a talk about their own trip to Panama Canopy and Lodge on January 22!

## A SWIFT NIGHT OUT

For the seventh year, the Driftwood Wildlife Association will be hosting "A Swift Night Out."

As summer draws to a close and the swifts have finished raising their young, these fascinating aerial acrobats begin to congregate in communal roosts prior to their migration in the fall. Some roosts may consist of an extended family group of a half a dozen birds or so, but the larger sites can host hundreds or even thousands of swifts. We encourage you to involve your local Audubon chapters, bird clubs, scout groups and neighbors in this exhilarating spectacle.

Here is how it works: Keep your eyes to the skies at dusk and watch for areas where swifts are feeding. Look for a tall shaft, chimney or similar structure to locate where Chimney Swifts go to roost in your area.

On one night over the weekend of September 7-9 observe the roost starting about thirty minutes before dusk and estimate the number of swifts that enter. When you have your number, contact us with your results. That's all there is to it!

For more information and results, please visit our web site at [www.chimneyswifts.org](http://www.chimneyswifts.org) and click on the "Swift Night Out" link.

## REVISED CHECKLIST

A revised "Field Checklist of Avian Species for Forsyth County" is now available. This is the first revision since the 2000 checklist prepared by Ramona Snavelly, and we dedicate the 2007 edition to her memory. The revised checklist includes 290 species that have been recorded in the county and lists 104 as current breeding species.

The checklist separately identifies 46 of these species as reported at least once in the county, but for which current sightings should be considered accidental. We encourage birders to document and report possible sightings of these species to the chapter. We think this format offers a good educational tool for local and visiting birders.

Much thanks to David Disher, Royce Hough and Hop Hopkins for helping with this project. Copies of the checklist will be available at Saturday bird walks, chapter programs, local birding stores and, of course, on our website. We also plan to issue soon an updated "Birding Guide of Winston-Salem and Vicinity" with descriptions of local Birding Spots.

*Phil Dickinson*

## SUMMER SIGHTINGS

Late additions to our Spring Count included Gray-cheeked Thrush, Bank Swallow, Ring-necked Duck and Sharp-shinned Hawk. Good birding continued throughout May. Jeff Turner found a Bay-Breasted Warbler and John Haire observed an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Reynolda Gardens, while Nora Bennett caught a Bald Eagle on camera on the Wake Forest campus. Hop Hopkins posted a great photo of a Sora at Archie Elledge, and Jim Martin heard a Warbling Vireo at Salem Glen. This species is not known to nest in Forsyth County.

Much of the summer action has been at Archie Elledge and the Muddy Creek Greenway. Yellow-breasted Chats are at both locations. At the treatment plant in late July, six immature White Ibis spent time on the mud flats and a Northern Bobwhite showed itself on a nearby hill. Loggerhead Shrikes have not been reported in Forsyth for several years, but Cynthia Donaldson and a friend found a pair in neighboring Yadkin County. Other noteworthy sightings were an immature Common Loon at Salem Lake and a fly-by Red-headed Woodpecker outside Jim's Cherry Street office. At least six pair of Yellow-crowned Night Herons nested at Miller Park this year. Cooper's Hawks and Barred Owls nested successfully at the park, too. Many of us also have enjoyed watching Barred Owls at Tanglewood and at Historic Bethabara.

*Phil Dickinson*



White Ibis

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION

This summer, I have been working as an intern at the Audubon Naturalist Society's (ANS) Woodend Sanctuary in Chevy Chase, MD. ANS was founded in 1897 and promotes "stewardship of the region's environment by educating citizens about the natural world, promoting conservation of biodiversity, and protecting wildlife habitat". There is a ten week summer-camp program at ANS where there are about five classes a week, each with about sixteen kids who come in at 9 a.m. and leave at 3 or 4 p.m. for one week. This summer I have been helping to teach preK-10th graders about various topics by means of outdoor education. I have been amazed how so many topics, ranging anywhere from pioneer life to natural disasters to animal adaptations, can all incorporate the local environment into the daily lesson plan so as to provide "real life" examples of the learned material. The camp has informally taken on a "No Child Left Inside" teaching policy that is quite effective. It has also been amazing to see how much information the kids already know, and to see them understand complex ideas through this teaching method.

It has been wonderful teaching the children at camp this summer. Seeing the excitement on their faces when they get to follow a deer, or discover the importance of camouflage when they find a toad hiding on a leaf, always makes my day. On one of the camps, the 5th-7th graders tested stream quality to see how it degraded as the stream flowed from a woodland preserve, through D.C., before emptying into the Potomac. They were able to understand the importance of clean streams and buffers.

Of course, I am always excited whenever I can pique their interest with birds. So when we were all awakened in the middle of the night on a camping trip by a screeching Barred Owl, and when a male Pileated Woodpecker perched and sang nearby, then flew overhead, I was happy to have shared the sight with them.

The children are always full of questions. Having the classes outside and encouraging those questions has resulted in captivation and involvement in the material as they are truly interested. As I finish up my last week at camp before heading back to school, I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to help these children become more interested in their environment. They now know that nature is full of surprises and interesting creatures. I just hope that the children who do not attend camp are also given the opportunity to explore the outdoors and realize that what is learned in school can often be applied to nature.

**Jeff Turner**



***Cerulean Warbler***

Seven members of the ASFC took part in the Spring Trip to the Asheville area. The weather was fair for the most part in the mornings and any rain was in the afternoon so that worked out pretty well for birding. The "old timers" in the group had a reunion with "C" Sommer who joined us for birding on Saturday. He and his wife, Nancy, then hosted the group for a dinner that evening and it was a perfect way to end the outing.

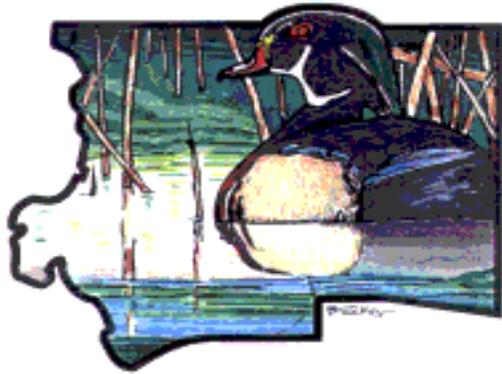
The group started Friday at the Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary in Asheville and then traveled south on the Blue Ridge Parkway. A highlight for the day was to find the Alder Flycatcher at Black Balsam just south of Graveyard Fields and then at Devil's Courthouse we scoped Peregrines nesting on the cliffs opposite the parking area. It was a good educational opportunity as other visitors to the site enjoyed viewing the birds too.

On Saturday it was a real treat to have Marilyn Westphal as our guide on the Parkway north of Asheville. Not enough can be said about her knowledge of the area and its birds. We were very fortunate to have this opportunity to bird with Marilyn. Among many other birds she helped us find the Cerulean Warbler and just as our morning was ending north of Mt. Mitchell a flock of Red Crossbills flew over us. They were just two of the ninety species seen on the trip.

**Don Adamick**

## 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](http://www.forsythaudubon.org)

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# The Audubon Society of Forsyth County

## 2006-2007 CHAPTER BOARD

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At-Large:	Norwood Lide	766-7531

Add this toucan and other tropical birds to your life list by traveling to Panama with the ASFC (see page 3 of this newsletter)!



## 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 \$10.00 (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.