



April 2016
No. 363

Ecobon

The Hilton Head Island Audubon Society is a Chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.

APRIL PROGRAM by: *Kathy Greider, Program Director*

Thursday, April 7, 2016 3:00 pm at Coastal Discovery Museum/Honey Horn, 70 Honey Horn Dr in Sea Island Room

Note: 1st Thursday of the month instead of the 2nd Thursday due to Heritage Golf

"Migrants on South Carolina's Coastal Beaches"

by *Nicholas Wallover*

Every spring and fall, thousands of shorebirds representing over 20 species arrive on the beaches of the South Eastern US on their way to their wintering grounds. Come discover and discuss this exciting time of the year, and learn about the local trends based on ongoing survey data.

Nicholas Wallover is currently the Regional Biologist for the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve, a 140,000 acre region of the South Carolina Coast stretching from Charleston to Beaufort Counties, and Manager of the McKenzie Field Station at Bennett's Point. The ACE Basin includes some of the finest birding locations in the Southeast (Bear Island WMA, Donnelley WMA, Hollings NWF plus some additional smaller but not less important natural areas. Nick has worked on numerous research and management efforts up and down our state's coast, with an emphasis on protected species, including bald eagles, sea turtles, shorebirds, and dolphins.

FREE. Open to the public without registration. SNOWBIRDS WELCOME!

Info: Coastal Discovery Museum at 843.689.6767 or

HHI Audubon's Website: www.hiltonheadaudubon.org

Do You Need a Seat at Audubon Meetings?

Due to our ever growing number of participants at our monthly meeting we will start a trial Reservation Service for a limited number of seats at each meeting. We appreciate the fact that some of our members have a hard time walking into the meetings and this service is for only for those who really need it! Reserved signs will be removed at 2:50 if the member is not present by then in order to allow others to find a seat.

Call Kathy Greider at 404.313.8208 to reserve your space. Hope this helps those of you who are having a problem.

HHI Audubon

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The *Ecobon* is a monthly publication (September through May) of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society. Subscription is a benefit of membership. Direct inquiries to P.O. Box 6185, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938 or call one of the above officers or chairpersons.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Robert Rommel*

It's Baby Time!

It's that time of year when birds will begin nesting and soon babies will be everywhere. It's easy for us to think that bird babies are much like human babies but with feathers, yet within the animal kingdom young of the feathered kind are quite different from the human variety.

First of all, birds grow up fast, amazingly fast. The vast majority of species will reach adult size in a few weeks with nearly all reaching full size in a few months. That's a far cry from the 12 months for a dog, 16 years for a human, or 25 years it takes an elephant to reach full size. This enormous growth comes as the result of around the clock eating and a full nest of chicks will keep the parents quite busy. Life is dangerous for baby birds and more than 70% of all birds will die within their first 6 months.

For humans, having twins or triplets is a relatively rare event – a little over 3% of all births are multiple births. For birds it's the complete opposite. The albatrosses which lay one egg every two years are the exception. Most species have clutches of 4 or more eggs. The European Blue Tit, a relative of our chickadee, can lay up to 19 eggs in a clutch. For turkeys and grouse having more than a dozen in the norm. To top it off, Bobwhites have laid as many as 28 eggs in a single clutch. If that wasn't impressive enough, many of these species have more than one clutch in a year! Imagine trying to remember the names of this many children!

Lastly, human babies are helpless for the first few years of their life and even after that require extensive care for many years. While most songbirds are altricial, or helpless at birth, this isn't the case for a lot of birds. Many species are precocial, or somewhat grown and mobile at birth. You are probably familiar with the sight of fuzzy little ducklings or goslings that can run behind their parent or swim from the time they hatch. This is also the case with swans, grebes, loons, rails, cranes, plovers, sandpipers, and many others. For most of these species the young can feed themselves after hatching and the parents just keep a watchful eye over the young for the first few weeks. The precocial lifestyle is taken to the extreme in a group of Australian and Asian birds called the scrubfowl. These birds bury their eggs in a large mound of dirt much like a turtle. When the chicks hatch they dig themselves out of the pile and come fully feathered and able to fly on their first day of life!

Take some time this spring to watch the babies of the birds grow up. Look for both some of the similarities and some of the differences between avian young and mammals. Enjoy the experience for it won't be long before these young birds are full-grown and flying around our forests and marshes!



--- Reminder ---
**April's Meeting will be April 7th.
due to the Heritage Golf Tournament**

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

We have had another very good month for reported bird sightings in our area! Our Spring migration has started while some of our Winter visitors are still around for several more weeks and others have already departed for regions northward.

Rare species reported during the past month were: Snowy Plover at Little Tybee Island, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Fox Sparrow on Hilton Head Island, Brown Creeper at Fort Pulaski, Western Kingbird and Virginia Rail on Hutchinson Island, Snow Goose at Savannah NWR and Red-necked Grebe on Spring Island.

Several Out-Of-Season and overwintering Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Painted Buntings were reported as well as a rare and OOS migrant Wilson's Warbler again this month.

Many reported Uncommon species included: Early Reddish Egret, Whip-poor-will, Least Bittern, migrant Yellow Warbler, Baltimore Oriole, Purple Finch, Dark-eyed Junco, endangered Piping Plover, irruptive Pine Siskin, Blue-headed Vireo, Hairy and Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, Rusty Blackbird, Lesser and Greater Black-backed Gulls, Orange-crowned Warbler, Saltmarsh and Field Sparrows, American Kestrel, Ruddy, American Black and Mottled Ducks, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, Redhead (duck), American Pipit, Red-throated Loon, American Pipit, Peregrine Falcon, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, American Avocet, Golden-Crowned Kinglet, American White Pelican, Wilson's Plover, American Bittern, Loggerhead Shrike, American Pipit, Glossy Ibis, Winter, Sedge and House Wrens, Wild Turkey, White-breasted Nuthatch, Merlin, Long-billed Dowitcher and Caspian Tern.



Yellow headed Blackbird



Yellow Warbler

Other First-Of-The-Season and "Good Finds" reported included: Arriving Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, arriving Purple Martin, Spotted Sandpiper, Bald Eagle (a good number and nesting), Sora, American Goldfinch, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Common Loon, Surf and Black Scoters, Horned Grebe, Great Horned Owl, American Robin, Northern Gannet, Mallard, Spotted Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, American Oystercatcher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Meadowlark, Gray Catbird, Black & White Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Wilson's Snipe, Bonaparte's Gull, Red Knot, Eastern Screech Owl, Northern Gannet, many Cedar Waxwings and others.

Many thanks to all reporting their sightings:

Robert Rommel, Kathy/Grant Greider, Mary Alice Tartler, Diana Churchill, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Cindy/Ken Groff, Joanne McMemamin, Dottie Bass, Jane/Abie Hester, Jim Grove, Mark Hymer, Doreen Cubie, Shelia/Roger Johnson, Karen Marts, Deb Beam, Steve Calver, Chris Marsh, Buddy Campbell, Russ Wigh, Annette Hausman, Mary Ann Lueckel and a number of visitors.

To report a bird sighting that is Accidental, Rare, Uncommon, Out-Of-Season (OOS), First-Of-The-Year (FOTY) or First-Of-The-Season (FOTS) or a species that you consider to be a 'good find' e-mail: BirdingFriends@yahoo.com or call 843-432-2661. Please state your full name, the bird species sighted, date and location and other pertinent sighting information.

It is a great time of year to bird with our Summer birds arriving, our transient Spring migrants moving through our area and some of our Winter birds still here but leaving soon! Please continue reporting your rare, uncommon and 'good bird' finds.

Membership Report for April 2016

We'd like to welcome the following new members who joined the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society since the last Ecobon was published.

New members include:

Virginia and John Holihan
Nancy Ridgway
Michael Schrader
Edward and Peggy Simmer
Helen L. Wilbur



Please welcome them!

Have questions about your membership? Need to update your email?

Contact:

Carol Clemens clemens318@roadrunner.com

Fran Baer seatwo@roadrunner.com



Check out our new HH birding app!

<https://www.hiltonheadislandbirdingtrail.org/>

and the State Birding app:

<https://www.southcarolinabirdingtrail.org/>

You can go to the App store and download them for free or use them on the above web sites.

April Field Trip

Hello Everyone,

We have a few spots available for this field trip please let me know if you're interested in joining us.

Date: April 2, 2016 - Start: 8:15am

Place: Beidler Forest

Leader: Matt Johnson

Carpool time: 6:00am @ Neo's Restaurant in the parking lot at Moss Creek village

Cost: \$12.00 per person prepaid before March 15th. Make checks payable to HHIAS.

Limit: 15

We are planning on box lunches from a local restaurant, cost will be under \$10.00 for anyone interested.

Please contact Cindy Groff to sign up at 843-682-3840 or smilingcin@yahoo.com

BIRD NESTING MARVELS

When most people think of a bird's nest, they probably imagine a grassy little bowl with weeds stalks and mud, in the crook of a tree. While this describes the typical nest of the American Robin, it doesn't come close for many other backyard birds. To name a few (more next month), here are some fascinating nesters in the bird world.

Belted Kingfisher. An underground nester, this bird digs its own burrow in the bare earth near the top of an exposed bank along a lake or river.



Chimney Swift. Many birds make their own glue to hold their nests together. In China, a swift makes its entire nest from a glue-like substance it excretes from its bill. Here, the chimney swift uses its gluey saliva to stick its nest to the insides of chimneys.

Another common bird that glues its nest with mud is the Barn Swallow.



(from Birds and Blooms)



Interested in a trip to The Center for Birds of Prey?

The Sun City Bird Club has invited our members to join them on Wednesday, May 11th for a special trip to the Birds of Prey Center near Mt. Pleasant SC. The trip includes a guided walk of the center and flight demonstrations of several magnificent birds of prey. This field trip also gives you the opportunity to meet fellow birders from Sun City.

Details:

Date: Wednesday, May 11

Time: the chartered bus leaves Sun City at 8AM and will return there by 6PM

Included: Round-trip transportation from Sun City, entrance fees, lunch, and tip for the driver

Cost: \$95 per person, payable at time of registration.

Interested? Fill out the form that is available by email. Include a check for \$95 per person made out to Weekend-Get-A-ways on a Tank of Gas.

Mail the form (available by email) and your check to:

Kathy Greider
100 Mathews Drive
40 Heron Lake
Hilton Head, SC 29926

Spaces are limited so don't delay!

Questions? Contact Kathy Greider at: 404-313-8202



Like to follow eagles on their nests? The following website has links to several they consider the top camera sites. Links are provided for the National Arboretum, and nest cameras in Florida, Minnesota, Iowa, and Pennsylvania.

<http://infinitespider.com/the-best-bald-eagle-cam/>

Most probably are aware of the Berry College, GA nest cam. http://www.georgiawildlife.com/BerryEagleCam#.Ut_L9vw2jgA.email

Spend a few minutes watching one of these bests!

Submitted by Carol Clemens



New Hall Bird Walks

The Hilton Head Island Audubon Society is conducting guided walks at the Audubon Newhall Preserve on Palmetto Bay Road on Hilton Head Island at 10 am on Thursdays. Audubon Newhall Preserve Guided Walks will be held on April 7, 14, 21, and 28, and May 5, 12, 19, and 26 (weather permitting). Experienced naturalists will discuss the history, plants, and wildlife found on the 50 acre nature preserve. The walks are free to the public but donations are appreciated. Reservations are not required. Additional information can be obtained by calling 651-491-1851.



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NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Jack Greenshields

The Audubon Newhall Preserve on Palmetto Bay Road has had some impressive early blooming of vegetation this year and water levels in the pond and pocosin are higher than seen in years. The aeration system which had been shut down for the winter to save the cost of electricity has been restarted to prevent algae growth.

The South Coast Chapter of the South Carolina Native Plant Society is planning a Field Trip to Newhall in May.

Volunteer Trail Monitors assignments for 2016 have been filled by Bob Clemens, Joan Shulman, Sherm Barker, Steve Rupprecht, Sandy Hunter, Joanne McMenemy, Tom Hennessey, Bill Jordan, and Jack Greenshields.

Our 10 am Thursday Guided Walk program has been restarted for March, April, and May. The walks are free to the public but donations are appreciated. Reservations are not required---just meet the guide in the parking lot. Guides for this Spring include Grant Greider, Marie McClune, Karen Marts, Don Grubba, Kay Grinnell, Joanne Voulelis, Pauline Jones, Rita Kernan, and Jack Greenshields.

The Plantation Garden Club Toured the Newhall Preserve on March 21. Two dozen members were led on guided walks by Grant and Kathy Greider, Rita Kernan, and Jack Greenshields.

Tom Hennessey has volunteered to lead the Newhall Preserve Entry/Exit Gate Project. The existing gate has room for only one vehicle and there should be room for two for exit and entry.

There is a need for additional volunteers at the Audubon Newhall Preserve. If interested, please contact Jack Greenshields at jackg308@gmail.com or 651-491-1851.



Notes from the Conservation Committee by Jack Greenshields

Fran Baer led the team of Susan Thomas and Miho Kinnas and conducted the five winter bird surveys at the Folly/Burkes/Collier area.

We continue to monitor the retention pond behind Kroger and expect that the educational viewing platform will soon be constructed. The construction of the apartment buildings on Broad Creek appears to be delayed (Site East #1 @ 136 units and Site East #2 @ 104 units)

The Hilton Head Beach Renourishment Project has been delayed due to equipment availability. We will continue to monitor this major effort with the biggest concern being project management at the Fish Haul/Spa site and Mitchellville Beach.

Susan Murphy and Fran Baer review the agenda items for Town Council and Town Committee meetings each week. There has not been anything relevant to our conservation issues recently.

If anyone has a comment or question, please contact Jack Greenshields at jackg308@gmail.com or 651-491-1851.

EXPERT TIPS FOR ATTRACTING HUMMINGBIRDS

Hummingbirds are some of the most fascinating and flashy fliers you'll ever see. Yet they are some of the most misunderstood. To think like they might, use the following advice.

"Use Red, It Really Does Work". They instinctively watch for red things and investigate them.

"We Don't Need Fancy Food". Measure one part white sugar to four parts water and mix thoroughly. If you boil it, it might keep longer before it starts to spoil.

"Keep It Clean". Sugar water that starts to grow moldy is dangerous to birds. Replace at least once every 3 or 4 days, more often in hot weather.

"Put It Out in the Open"- where it can be seen by birds flying by at a distance.

"We Are Creatures of Habit". Hummingbirds have a highly developed sense of "spatial memory".

"Leave it to the Ladies". The male never helps with nest building, incubation or feeding the young. The amazing female does all that work herself.



(from Birds and Blooms)



Save this Date

Wednesday, May 4th 5:30 pm
Annual Hilton Head Island Audubon Society Annual Picnic
Waddell Mariculture Center



Audubon

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APRIL ~ MAY 2016 Calendar

APRIL

April 7, 14, 21, 28 ~ Newhall Guided Walks at 10:00 am

Sat. Apr. 2 Field Trip at Beidler Forest.....8:15 am

Thurs. Apr. 7 Board Meeting at CCHH.....10:00 am

Thurs. Apr. 7 Monthly Meeting at Honey Horn..... 3:00 pm

MAY

May 5, 12, 19, 26 ~ Newhall Guided Walks at 10:00 am

Weds. May 4 Board Meeting at Waddell..... 4:00 pm

Weds. May 4 Annual Picnic at Waddell..... 5:00 pm

Monthly meetings of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society are regularly scheduled at 3:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, September through May. Meetings are held at the Coastal Discovery Museum, 70 Honey Horn Drive. Members and guests welcome!



BEQUESTS

If you wish to honor a family member or friend with a memorial gift, or remember the Audubon Newhall Preserve or the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society in your will, your gift may be in the form of securities, cash, life insurance, real estate, or other property.

Contact your own estate planner or our Audubon Chapter at P.O. Box 6185, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938.

Sharing your estate with Audubon not only reduces the taxes on your estate but will help protect birds, wildlife, and their habitat in the years to come.