

SEPTEMBER 2016

No. 365

# Ecobon

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

**MAY PROGRAM** *by: Kathy Greider, Program Director*

**Thursday, September 8, 2016** at 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

*Location: Coastal Discovery Museum at Honey Horn, 70 Honey Horn Dr in the Sea Island Room.*

## ***Birding Mongolia***

For more than three decades, a birding trip to Mongolia had been on Dot Bambach's "bucket list." She finally visited that destination in June 2016. From windswept steppes to snowy mountain lakes and the Gobi Desert, Mongolia is a country with a great variety of both habitats and birds. It also has a long and fascinating history and a rich cultural tradition, all of which will be addressed in Dot's slide presentation.

Dot Bambach has been interested in birds since the age of five. Although her professional background is in corporate finance and management, she has immersed herself in volunteer activities concerning birds, wildlife, and habitat preservation since retiring in 1998. She has served as a U.S. Fish & Wildlife volunteer at a number of Low Country national wildlife refuges since she arrived in Savannah in 1999, logging several hundred hours a year by conducting bird surveys, monitoring wood stork nesting success, leading field trips, greeting visitors, and assisting with refuge maintenance and up-keep. In addition, she is Vice President and Conservation Chair of Ogeechee Audubon Society in Savannah, Georgia and a member of the Board of Directors for the Refuge Friends group.

This should be an excellent program.

*FREE ~ Open to the public without registration VISITORS WELCOME!*

*For More Information Contact: Coastal Discovery Museum at 843.689.6767*

*Website: [www.hiltonheadaudubon.org](http://www.hiltonheadaudubon.org)*

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## **October Field Trip**

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2016

Time: 8:00 am

Place: Savannah National Wildlife Refuge Tupelo Trail and Little Back River Trail.

Special note: We will be taking a ride on one of the Refuge's open-seated travelers and will not be driving the Laurel Hill Drive Loop.

Closed toe shoes, long pants and bug spray is recommended.

Limit: 20

Carpool Meeting Spot: Neo's Restaurant in the parking lot at Moss Creek village.

Please contact Cindy Groff to sign up at 843-682-3840 or [smilingcin@yahoo.com](mailto:smilingcin@yahoo.com)



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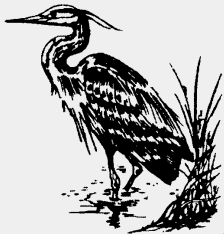
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The *Ecobon* is a monthly publication (September through May) of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society. Subscription is a benefit of membership. Direct inquiries to P.O. Box 6185, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938 or call one of the above officers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



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Robert Rommel*

### *The Need for Protected Area*

I hope everyone had a great summer and welcome back to anyone returning to the Hilton Head area! I just had one month in remote Newfoundland - a land full of beautiful landscapes and bountiful birds. I had many amazing wildlife experiences but one sticks out in my mind. I had hiked miles into the mountains of Gros Morne National Park and had a morning I'll never forget. I spent that morning with four moose: two bulls and a cow with her calf. I didn't just see the moose but got to experience a piece of their lives. I saw the calf explore with curiosity and wander off from its mother to come bounding back when it got too far. I saw the cow tenderly clean the calf and begin to search nervously when the calf wandered off a second time. The large bull walked right by me up the mountainside looking for fresh vegetation. I saw him feed at length and watched as a smaller bull came on the scene and respectfully deferred to the larger male giving him his space. Later the large bull lay down right in front of me and began to chew his cud. I saw the bulls use a wallow pit that the moose had made in a forested area. I even saw a 1,000-pound bull climb a tree (that story is a bit too long to explain here)!

It was an experience I'll never forget. But it was striking how different it was from my previous moose experiences on that trip to Newfoundland. Newfoundland has a higher moose density than anywhere else in North America. Hunting is very popular in Newfoundland and moose are one of the prime targets. In my previous two weeks in Newfoundland I had only seen two moose and each time they were quick to run into the cover of the forest and away from any human. The difference was incredible. I'll quickly forget the other moose I saw, but I am sure I'll always treasure that morning on the mountain.

I am not opposed to hunting. Hunting has led to some of the greatest conservation success stories this country has had. When it's done responsibly and with attention to population levels, a species can be hunted and still have a very healthy population. But just like it is important to set aside areas for hunting, it is also extremely important to set aside protected areas where hunting is not allowed. I admit that this is a somewhat selfish desire. It generally does not make a difference to the health of the species, but it does matter to the human experience. Fear of humans is a learned behavior just as tameness is learned. When a duck sees another duck act scared when it sees a person pop out of a car, that duck learns that people are a threat. And if a loon is nearby, it will learn the same even though it is not a hunted species. Being hunted over nearly their entire summer and winter range, wild ducks tend to be one of the most skittish birds. But there are few special spots in the country where a Wood Duck will swim 3 feet away from you without giving you a second glance. It may then flap its wings or engage in an aggressive charge at another Wood Duck drake. It won't change how many species a birder checks off on their daily list, but these situations lead to magical moments that can spark lifelong wonder and fascination in children, newfound appreciation in an adult mind, or just simply put a smile on someone's face. These situations yield the unforgettable moments that connect us to the natural world and lead us to appreciate the wildlife around us.

Unfortunately protected areas must be substantial in size. Even setting aside an area the size of most National Wildlife Refuges won't lead to ducks that tolerate humans. The birds move too much and are exposed to situations where hunting is common. It is much harder to build trust than it is to incite fear - after all if the animal makes one mistake with a predator it is a dead animal. Some of the large national parks are big enough to create this effect. Even some state parks are. States that are free of hunting for a species can generate this effect. When I was in Michigan, in many places the Sandhill Cranes were quite tame but in Alaska where they are hunted they can be extremely difficult to observe doing anything besides flying. I often send birders to Florida instead of South Carolina not because there are more birds there but because the birds have frequent peaceful interactions with people and that leads to tamer birds. I feel strongly that we ought to do whatever we can to support the creation of large protected areas. They may not matter for the conservation of most species, but protected areas are vitally important for fostering a love of wildlife and nature in general. In the meantime, treasure those magical situations when you observe a wild animal going about its life right in front of you.

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## RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

There is much to report since our last report covering bird sightings was through mid May. Birding has been very good in our HHI area despite a very hot Summer. Our Spring migration finished as one of our best with 25 warbler species and 18 other migrant species sighted. Our Summer birds arrived and some will stay until this Fall. We are off to a very good start on our early Fall migration and Winter arrival sightings.

Early Fall sightings reported to date - 11 warbler species already reported in our area including: rare Hooded, Prothonotary, Prairie and Yellow Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, American Redstart and rare Yellow-breasted Chat. Other migrants found also totaled 11 species including rare Wilson's Phalarope, rare Roseate Sandpiper, Black and Common Terns, accidental Shiny Blackbird, Stilt and Pectoral Sandpipers and accidental Cave and rare Cliff Swallows.

Rare bird species sighted during this long period were: Magnificent Frigatebird at Port Royal town, Gray Kingbird at Tybee Island, King and Virginia Rails at Hutchison Island, Scarlet Tanager and Common Ground Dove at Savannah NWR, Swainson's Warbler in Savannah, Roseate Spoonbill at several sites, Grasshopper Sparrow and White-rumped Sandpiper in Beaufort County plus those above.

Out-of-season birds reported were: rare Kentucky Warbler, American Wigeon, Black-bellied Plover and American Coot.



Magnificent Frigatebird  
by Carol Clemens

Uncommon species reported included: Piping Plover, Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites, American Woodcock, Glossy Ibis, Bobwhite, White-breasted Nuthatch, Bank Swallow, Wilson's Plover, Least Bittern, American White Pelican, Yellow-throated Vireo, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Whip-poor-will, Purple Gallinule, Mottled Duck, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Reddish Egret.

Many thanks to all reporting your bird sightings: Jane Hester, Dottie Bass, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Joanne McMenamin, Cindy/Ken Groff, Shelia/Roger Johnson, Dorothy Mosior, Doreen Cubie, Kathy/Grant Greider, Annette Hausman, Diana Churchill, Steve Calver, Mary Ann Lueckel, Russ Wigh, Buddy Campbell, Mary Alice Tartler,

Mary Jane Cruise, Dick Phillips and many visitors who reported their sightings.

To report a bird sighting that is Accidental, Rare, Out-Of-Season, Uncommon, 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](mailto:BirdingFriends@yahoo.com) or call 843-432-2661. Please state your full name, the bird species sighted, date and location of your sighting and other pertinent information.

It will soon be best time of year (Sept./Oct. migration) to get out into the field to bird and find some of our Fall migrants and Winter arrivals, as well as our Summer birds that are still here.



Kentucky Warbler  
by Kathy Greider



Scarlet Tanager  
by Kathy Greider

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## About the Avian Conservation Center Injured Bird Response System

The Avian Conservation Center receives calls about injured birds of prey and shore birds from throughout South Carolina as well as neighboring Georgia and North Carolina, and sometimes beyond. By utilizing a vast and dedicated network of Transport Volunteer Staff, the Center is able to provide professional quality medical care for more than 600 birds annually. As of today, the Center is proud to have admitted more than 7,000 birds for medical care, the majority of which were released back to their natural habitat. However, as mentioned previously, these successes are largely due to the generous efforts of regular citizens who notice a compromised bird and take action by contacting the Center for help. In fact, as I write this, our injured bird dispatch is working on the transport of several owls from different parts of the state in addition to a Peregrine falcon from Edisto Island.

Timely and appropriate transport procedures can literally determine the likelihood of survival for an injured bird. There is not a more important phase in the recovery of an injured bird than that between the time that it is found and when it arrives at the Center. The Center relies on hundreds of trained volunteers who are called upon regularly to assist with the capture and transport of these debilitated patients.

Being confined and transported is, at best, stressful to wild birds. When combined with injury, it can be fatal. Therefore, minimizing stress should always be a priority when looking to assist a bird in need. Adhere to the following protocols to help keep stress at a minimum:

- Avoid handling the bird
- Do not offer food, water, or medication
- Minimize all noise - minimal conversation, no music, radios, etc.
- Keep people, dogs, cats, and vehicles at a distance

Remember that a passive bird of prey that permits us to approach without attempting to flee or defend itself is likely in shock and in *very* critical condition. Swift and measured action is required to ensure the best outcome.

So, what do you do when you find an injured bird?

All injured birds should be handled only by those trained to do so. Capturing and containing a wild bird, even one compromised by injury or illness, can easily result in additional injuries to the bird and/or an injury for the individual involved. Every precaution should be taken to protect yourself from harm and to minimize stress on the bird.

Should you encounter an injured bird, please consider the following steps:

1. Make sure the bird is protected from further injury
  - If it's in a roadway, can you safely move it to the side of the road?
  - If it's vulnerable and on the ground, can you ensure that it stays undisturbed by people, dogs, cats, and vehicles by remaining nearby to watch and protect it?
2. Try to keep the bird's stress level at a minimum
  - Can you place a cardboard box over the bird to limit the sensory reaction?
  - Make sure people and their domesticated animals stay away, even if they are just curious and "want to take a peek"
  - Keep noise and human interaction at the lowest level possible
3. Call the Center for help
  - The Avian Conservation Center Injured Bird Dispatch line is answered from 9am to 9pm every day of the week and we return calls within a half hour of receiving a message – please keep our number handy!

This year the Center celebrates our Silver Anniversary marking 25 years of science, conservation, and education in the Low-country. Through its public programming on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, as well as outreach within the academic community, the Center reaches tens of thousands of individuals each year with critical conservation information. As a membership organization, contributions received provide crucial operating income, which support both the Avian Medical Clinic and the Education/Husbandry Department. Additionally, these funds help the Center maintain a state of preparedness for oiled bird response should there be a contaminant spill in South Carolina waters.

### Contact Information

Phone: 843.971.7474, listen for the prompt to select the Injured Bird Response line

Web: [www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org](http://www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org)

Email: [info@thecenterforbirdsofprey.org](mailto:info@thecenterforbirdsofprey.org)

Location: Awendaw, SC 29429

Medical Clinic - 4872 Seewee Rd.,

Public Entrance - 4719 North Highway 17





Introducing **Zugunruhefest** – the Southeast’s **most comprehensive migration-focused birding festival**. *Zugunruhe* (*zu – gun – rue*) is a German word derived from *Zug* (*move, migration*) and *Unruhe* (*restlessness*). This state of restlessness is commonly noted in migratory animals, especially birds.

As fall approaches and instincts prevail, birds are compelled by this silent call to take flight to their wintering grounds. As part of the Atlantic Flyway, the Lowcountry serves as a predictable thoroughfare for migrating raptors and shore birds during fall migration passage. Significantly, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which provides over-arching legal protection for all migratory birds, is marking its Centennial this year, a fitting context and milestone to recognize as we celebrate the wonders of migration.



**Zugunruhe**fest

*noun / 'zu - gun - rue /*

1. Birding festival celebrating the phenomenon of migratory restlessness.

**INFORMATIVE LECTURES WITH NOTED NATURALISTS**

**RECEPTION AND EXPERT ROUND-TABLE**

**ONSITE VENDORS AND FOOD TRUCKS**

**FLIGHT DEMONSTRATIONS**

**CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES**

**BOATING EXCURSIONS**

**BIRD WALKS**

**When:** Thursday – Saturday, September 15 – 17, 2016

**Where:** Avian Conservation Center/Center for Birds of Prey, 4719 North Highway 17, Awendaw, SC 29429. Bird walks, field trips and excursions will take place in additional locations throughout the Lowcountry.

**Admission:** Fees vary depending on activities chosen. For a complete schedule of activities with pricing, please visit [www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org/zugunruhefest](http://www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org/zugunruhefest) or call 843.971.7474 to have a schedule emailed to you.

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## NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE AND THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

by Jack Greenshields

With the cooler weather of Fall, we will again be offering guided walks at the Newhall Preserve every Thursday (weather permitting) at 10am starting September 1 through November 17. The walks are free, but donations are appreciated. No reservations are required. Questions can be directed to Jack Greenshields at 651-491-1851. There is a need for additional people to lead these walks and training will be provided.

Two long term visitors to the Newhall Preserve, Jeffrey Bendis and Barbara Butler of Woodstock, NY have generously donated two new 48 inch Skyline Garden Benches which are now installed at the Newhall Preserve opposite the observation deck. These are made from sturdy recycled plastic that will last for years without maintenance. This style will replace the old wooden benches on the property which are rotting away. Further donations would be appreciated!

Another generous action from local volunteer Jim Kavach who made a donation to the American Chestnut Society may help us finally solve the mystery of what kind of chestnut tree we have just outside our path around the pond. The South Carolina Forestry Commission thought that it might be an American Chestnut that has yet to suffer from blight, but cannot be certain. So Jim is arranging for DNA testing of our tree to determine its exact species.

The Carolina Bird Club is holding a meeting in Beaufort on September 30 and October 1. There will be 125-200 people in attendance. We have been asked by the US Fish and Wildlife Service to assist in tours of Pinckney Island NWR on these two days. (I could use a couple additional volunteers; if interested, please call or e-mail Jack Greenshields.)

Also regarding Pinckney, the Friends of the Savannah Wildlife Refuge System received \$37,000 to improve visitor accessibility at the refuge. This includes funding for the purchase of equipment including a multi-passenger electric shuttle, bicycles, helmets, and binoculars. Volunteers are also needed for upcoming programs at the NWR.

From a conservation perspective, Hilton Head Audubon submitted comments to the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the proposed new hunting regulations at the Savannah NWR. Also, we continue to survey the Folly on Hilton Head, monitor the Hilton Head Beach Renourishment project, follow the progress of the Shelter Cove Apartment project, and provide input regarding the potential destruction of the "Forest" in the North Forest Beach area.

Finally, a big thank you to Sandy Hunter who again served as our summer Newhall Trail Monitor!

Should anyone have any questions, please e-mail Jack Greenshields at [jackg308@gmail.com](mailto:jackg308@gmail.com) or call at 651-491-1851



**New 10-foot guest in Newhall Pond - moved in on August 16th!**

## Advantageous Giving

by  
Heather Hackett  
Planned Giving Specialist  
National Audubon Society

*Did you know you can make a gift that supports The Hilton Head Island Audubon Society while providing yourself or loved ones with lifetime income and significant tax savings? A **Charitable Gift Annuity** is a creative way to help meet your charitable and financial goals.*

*When you establish a charitable gift annuity with The National Audubon Society with a donation of cash or appreciated securities at a minimum of \$10,000 you will receive income for yourself or up to two beneficiaries for life. You may also be able eligible for significant tax savings now with a charitable deduction and reduced capital gains tax.*

*Charitable gift annuities are flexible and can be tailored to fit your needs. Your annuity payments are guaranteed and will remain the same throughout your lifetime, and will not be affected by market or economic conditions. With annuity rates much higher than CD and Money Market account rates this is an excellent investment that can diversify your portfolio while leaving a wonderful gift to HHI Audubon.*

If you are interested in helping to protect the places birds need most and want to keep HHI Audubon sustainability for years to come, while receiving a steady stream of income and tax benefits, please **request your no-obligation personalized gift proposal outlining your benefits.**

**You may contact me at 772-546-1233 or [hhackett@audubon.org](mailto:hhackett@audubon.org)**



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.*

## Membership Report for September 2016



Hi fellow birders!  
Please welcome the following new members who have joined us since late April 2016. It is nice to see folks joining even during our summer hiatus.

Kathy and David Love  
Nancy Marcone  
Kerry and Millie McMahon  
JoAnne VanDell

Remember that dues are based on a rolling calendar. For example, if you joined or renewed in March 2016, you are a paid member through March 2017. Once your dues have been received and processed, you will get an email from Membership confirming your renewal. We send an email reminder with a renewal form in the quarter your dues expire. The renewal may be mailed to us or turned in at a meeting.

Have a question about your membership? Have you changed your email? Please contact Carol [clemens318@roadrunner.com](mailto:clemens318@roadrunner.com) or Fran at [seatwo@roadrunner.com](mailto:seatwo@roadrunner.com)

## 2016 Christmas Bird Count



by Susan Murphy, CBC Coordinator

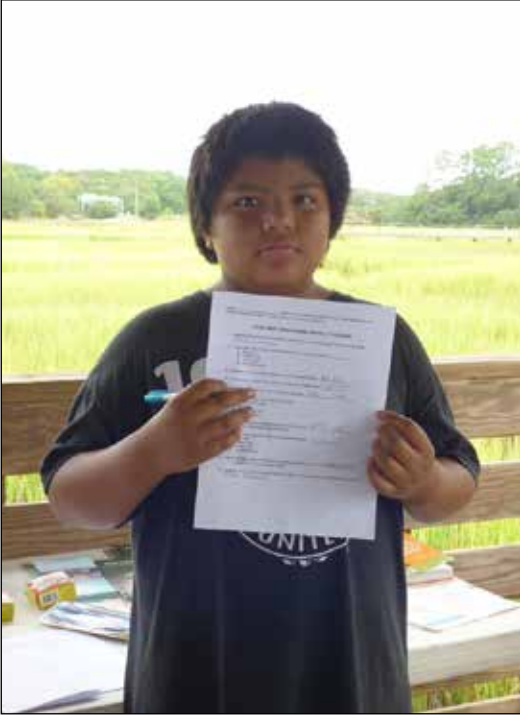
The 2016 Count is Thursday, December 15, for the Hilton Head area. We spread out across Hilton Head and Daufuskie Islands, parts of Bluffton and our waterways to identify species and count each bird we see in our 15-mile diameter circle. (Last year there were 2,505 count circles in the Western Hemisphere!)

If you are interested in being a part of this international effort, please e-mail me and I will have a Captain contact you!

Susan Murphy  
[HHICBC@gmail.com](mailto:HHICBC@gmail.com)  
(843) 686-3733

Note for our Sun City-Okatie members: The count for the Sun City-Okatie circle is Friday, December 16. If you are interested in participating there, please contact Jim Cubie, (843) 991-1059 or [jimcubie@gmail.com](mailto:jimcubie@gmail.com).

# Family Fun Day



On Thursday morning August 11th, HHIAS participated in Coastal Discovery Museum's Family Fun Day. Kay Lauener, Pauline Jones, Alan Biggs, Kathy Greider, and I volunteered to represent HHIAS while manning the pavilion on the Oyster Alley Boardwalk. We were lucky to have had 24 species of birds stop by for the kids and parents to see.

Additionally we taught about the salt marsh around us - spartina grass, periwinkle snails and the fiddler crabs, but blue crabs were the biggest draw. The small children had the opportunity to make book-marks and to work on some bird coloring pages.

Both parents and kids enjoyed a Salt Marsh Trivia game that we created for the event. Photos of some of the winners of the trivia game were posted on our Facebook page.

We gave out information about the upcoming HHIAS meeting/speaker schedule, Christmas Bird Count, field trips, Facebook page, and HHI birding app. We had well over a hundred "above average" kids and dedicated parents visit us. The Coastal Discovery Museum did a great job and we had the best Family Fun Day yet.







# Audubon

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

ECOBON  
P. O. Box 6185  
Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938

Title: Ecobon  
Issue Date: September 2016  
Frequency: Monthly Sept.-May  
Organization: Hilton Head Island Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 6185  
Hilton Head, South Carolina 29938  
Issue #: 365

## SEPTEMBER ~ OCTOBER 2016 Calendar

### SEPTEMBER

Thurs. Sept.1 Board Meeting at CCHH.....10:00 am  
Thurs. Sept. 8 Monthly Meeting at Honey Horn ..... 3:00 pm

### OCTOBER

Sat. Oct. 1 Field Trip at Savannah National WLR .....8:00 am  
Thurs. Oct. 6 Board Meeting at CCHH.....10:00 am  
Thurs. Oct. 13 Monthly Meeting at Honey Horn ..... 3:00 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.

