



JANUARY 2017
No. 369

Ecobon

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

JANUARY PROGRAM *by: Kathy Greider, Program Director*

Thursday, January 12, 2017 3:30 pm

Location: Palmetto Electric Cooperative's Community Room on 111 Mathews Drive in Hilton Head
(entrance and parking in the rear)

The History of Hobcaw Barony and the Bellefield Plantation

Lee Brockington from Hobcaw Barony will give us the full history of Hobcaw Barony the former home of Bernard Baruch. Bernard was a native South Carolinian and Wall Street millionaire. He and other millionaires and presidents visited the plantation to hunt deer and ducks each winter for many years. After Bernard died his daughter, Belle Baruch, inherited the property and turned into a research facility. We will learn the rest of the story from Lee. Please join us January 12th at 3 pm.

Remember, we will be meeting in a different location in January, February and March: The Palmetto Electric Cooperative's Community Room on 111 Mathews Drive in Hilton Head (entrance and parking in the rear)

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

For More Information Contact: 404.313.8208

Website: <http://www.hiltonheadaudubon.org>



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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*

Field Trips



I hope over the last few years you have been able to participate in some of the HHI Audubon's field trips. Cindy Groff did a fantastic job putting together a schedule of frequent trips of both local and regional interest.

I extremely grateful for all the hard work that Cindy put in to make these trips happen. Unfortunately, Cindy has had to step down from the position but she will remain a valuable member of the Hilton Head Audubon family.

The Field Trip Chair position is currently vacant and as a result we don't have any scheduled field trips for the upcoming winter and spring months. We'd love for someone to volunteer to fill this position. The Field Trip Chair does not have to lead any field trips, only set up the schedule and arrange leaders for the trips. The Field Trip Chair is also responsible for managing attendance and payments from non-members. If you'd like to volunteer for this position, please feel free to call me any time at (734) 274-1796. If no one steps up to fill this position, we will all be without our beloved Audubon trips to see the migrating warblers at the Solomon Tract of Savannah NWR, wading birds at springtime rookeries, resident birds at Pinckney Island, and the shorebird migration and horseshoe crab spawn.

I hope everyone is getting a chance to fit in some private field trips of their own whether it is to the lagoon beside their house, the beaches at Mitchelville or the Folly, or someplace on your travels. I always take the first week of the year to plan out priorities for what places and birds I would like to see. Hopefully this year I'll get a chance to visit some of our winter loons on their nesting grounds and perhaps take in some of the hummingbird migration in the southwest. Have a very Happy New Year and I hope 2017 brings some great birds to you!

Robert



RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Many area reports by our birders have shown that our month was another excellent one for area bird sightings. Many of our Winter bird arrivals have been reported. Some of our Winter duck species are beginning to show up in our area but larger numbers should be arriving in January with the advent of colder weather.



Snow Goose

Rare species sighted and reported this month include: Rufous Hummingbird in Sun City, Snow Goose and King Rail at Savannah NWR, Broad-winged Hawk in Sea Pines, Red-breasted Nuthatch on Pinckney Island NWR, Western Kingbird and Virginia Rail on Hutchinson Island and Roseate Spoonbill and Solitary Sandpiper in the town of Beaufort.

Out-of-season species were: Migrants Black-throated Blue Warbler, Northern Waterthrush and American Restart and a good number of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds ... hope they stay all Winter!

American Bittern, Rusty Blackbird, migrant Baltimore Oriole, Long-billed Dowitcher, American White Pelican, Caspian Tern, Peregrine Falcon, Saltmarsh and Vesper Sparrows, Loggerhead Shrike, American Kestrel, Merlin, Stilt Sandpiper, American Pipit, Mottled Duck, Greater and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Eurasian-collared, White-winged and Common Ground Doves, Winter, Sedge and House Wrens, Orange-crowned Warbler, migrant Yellow-throated and Blue-headed Vireos and White-breasted Nuthatch.

Arriving Winter birds and “Good Finds” reported this month included: Migrant American Robin, Wilson’s Snipe, Hermit Thrush, many Bald Eagles, American Goldfinch, Red-breasted Merganser, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Surf and Black Scoters, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Gadwall, many Hooded Mergansers, American Coot and others.

Many thanks to all reporting your bird sightings: Jane/Abby Hester, Dottie Bass, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Joanne McMenamin, Cindy/Ken Groff, Shelia/Roger Johnson, Dorothy Mosior, Kathy/Grant Greiger, Mark Hyner, Doreen Cubie, Verma Docherty, Rita Kernan, Miho Kinnas, Diana Churchill, Steve Calver, Buddy Campbell,

Mary Alice Tartler, Dick Phillips, Kay Grinnell and many visitors.



Rufous Hummingbird

Photo by Frank Leung

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 or call 843-432-2661. Please state your full name, the bird species sighted, date and location of your sighting and other pertinent information. Keep up the good work of reporting your “Good Bird Finds”!

Our annual Christmas Bird Count was just been completed and appears to be a very good one based on initial reports despite our loss of some habitat from Hurricane Matthew ... detailed CBC results will be reported soon. It is a great time to bird and look for our Winter ducks and other species!



American Woodcock

Photo by Jack Bartholmai

2016 Christmas Bird Count

by Susan Murphy, CBC Coordinator



The Christmas Bird Count was held on Thursday, December 15th. Area Captains reported their results to the review panel on December 19th. Our numbers are down this year and we will have more details in the next Ecobon.



Here are a few photos from the count day in Palmetto Hall, courtesy of Jerry Griffin.

Cattle Egret



Back Row: Jerry Griffin, Steve Laxdal, Rick Kasper, Dick Bellmer
Front Row: George Banino, Wendy Bowles, Gus Christ, Barry Lowes, Carl Samberg

An App to ID Your Bird Photos

That's right: our Merlin Bird ID app just got an upgrade that analyzes photos on your phone and offers bird ID suggestions. Just snap a photo or choose one from your photo library, answer a couple of questions, and Merlin will offer smart suggestions about what North American species it might be. Read more at eBird or download Merlin free for your iOS or Android device and try it out.

Can't Get a Photo? Merlin still offers uncannily good ID advice from a simple bird description—now expanded to feature 650 bird species.

From Cornell Lab of Ornithology

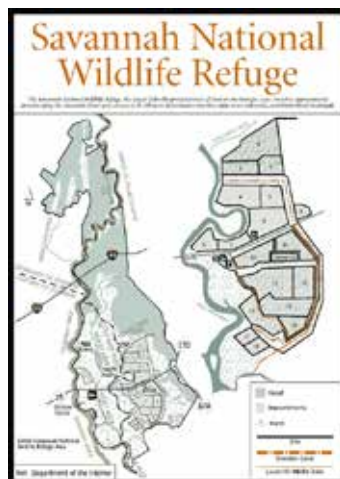
Savannah National Wildlife Refuge

Savannah National Wildlife Refuge Meeting is January 14th to discuss future plans for the Refuge. This is a great time for all of us who have concerns to be heard. Please try to attend.

The refuge is hosting a presentation by biologist Chuck Hayes on Saturday, January 14 @ 1:00 p.m. at the Savannah NWR Visitor Center.

He plans to discuss current management operations and future management goals.

Everyone is welcome and this would be a great time to ask questions or make suggestions for future management and/or birder access. The visitor center is located at 694 Beech Hill Ln, Hardeeville, SC



Membership Report for January 2017

Hi fellow birders!

Please welcome the following new members who have joined us since our last Ecobon was published.



Jack and Lois Rodgers

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. Thanks to all who promptly renew your membership! Your support is greatly appreciated. Have a question about your membership? Have you changed your email? Please contact Carol cclemons318@roadrunner.com or Fran at seatwo@roadrunner.com



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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.

Have you seen a shorebird with a colored flag on its leg?

You can help save imperiled migratory shorebirds by recording and reporting information on any color-marked birds you spot.

An international team of researchers has been marking several species of imperiled migratory shorebirds. These birds make long annual trips from wintering grounds as far south as the tip of South America to breeding grounds in the high Arctic.

The marked birds—red knots, semipalmated sandpipers, ruddy turnstones, sanderlings, whimbrels and Hudsonian godwits—sport leg bands and flags colored according to the country where they were affixed. Most flags also feature codes that make it possible to identify individual birds.

“Resightings” of marked birds when they stop to rest and feed along their journey provide much-needed data on movement patterns and habitat uses and needs. This information is vital to understanding and reversing the population declines migratory shorebirds are experiencing, and scientists need your help collecting it.



© JAN VAN DE KAM

HOW YOU CAN HELP

By making a few key observations and entering them into an online database, you can do your part to keep these birds from disappearing from our shores forever. (You can also look up all the other data collected on the birds you spot.)

All you need is a spotting scope, binoculars or camera with telephoto lens, a willingness to be on the lookout for marked birds and a commitment to not disturbing them.

Learn more and sign up at
www.bandedbirds.org

www.bandedbirds.org is supported by the following organizations:





Audubon

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

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JANUARY ~ FEB2017 Calendar

JANUARY

Thurs. Jan. 5 Board Meeting10:00 am
Thurs. Jan. 12 Monthly Meeting at Palmetto Electric3:00 pm

FEBRUARY CALENDAR 2017

Thurs. Feb 2 Board Meeting10:00 am
Thurs. Feb 9 Monthly Meeting3:00 pm

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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.