



Ecobon

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

September Meeting: After our summer hiatus, we are excited to begin the new meeting season with a program on the fascinating world of mushrooms. Please join us as we return to the Coastal Discovery Museum for our September meeting!

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM by: Alan Biggs, Assistant Program Director

THURSDAY, September 14, 2017 3:00 ~ 4:15 pm



"Blewits, Humpbacks, Bird's Nests, and Other Mushroom Adventures"

Blewits, Humpbacks, Bird's Nests, and Other Mushroom Adventures – Mushrooms have a long and fascinating history in our folklore, art, cuisine, and other societal endeavors. This presentation will introduce you to the wonderful world of the fungi, especially those that form mushrooms. The talk will cover some of our most common poisonous and edible mushrooms with information on their life history and ecology.

Alan Biggs is currently a full-time resident of Hilton Head Island. He has his PhD in Plant Pathology from Penn State University and was on the faculty of West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, for 25+ years. Dr. Biggs is now Professor Emeritus, having done research on plant wound healing and fungal and bacterial diseases of apple and peach trees. Alan has written numerous professional and popular articles on fungi and currently contributes articles for the "Fungal Foes and Mycological Maladies" section of FUNGI Magazine. He's given numerous popular presentations on mushrooms and taught several advanced Master Naturalist classes on mushroom identification.

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Upcoming Audubon Programs: Our program team has scheduled some interesting programs covering a range of topics. Below is the program schedule as it currently stands. Please note that the April meeting is one week later to avoid Heritage Week.

Oct. 12th - Dave Davies – Kirkland Warblers

Nov. 19th - Vicky McMillan – Dragonflies

Dec 7th - Annual Christmas Bird Count evening program at First Presbyterian Church 7:00PM

Dec. 15th - **Hilton Head Island Christmas Bird Count**

Jan 11th - Diana Churchill – Sparrow Identification

Feb. 8th - Roy Thimineur – Australian Birds and other Wildlife

March 8th - Daniel J. Prohaska – Development Officer, Center for Birds of Prey

April 19th - (NOTE DATE CHANGE!) – Nancy Owen – Creatures of the Night

May 10th - Annual Picnic at Waddell Mariculture Center



HHI Audubon

Board of Directors:

President

Robert Rommerommel@robertrommel.com

Vice President (Interim)

Bill Nicol.....pennst63@aol.com

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Standing Committee Chairpersons:

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Tom Hennesseytmhennessey@outlook.com

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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 email one of the above officers or chairpersons or send a general email to hhiadubon@gmail.com



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Robert Rommel*

What's in a Name?

Every year a committee of the American Ornithologists' Union meets to vote on changes to the names of birds within all of the Americas from Canada to Argentina. They vote on things like whether to split or merge species, how to arrange species within bird families and other groups, and what species should be called. These are the official changes recognized by all birdwatchers. While the committee makes changes yearly, they typically aren't reflected in any field guides until a new edition is printed. Many of these changes come as the result of recent genetic and other scientific studies but some of the evidence can come from observations from people like us.

The last three years has seen a number of changes, some of which have affected the birds we see in South Carolina or that you might see elsewhere in the United States. Western Scrub-jays have been split into California Scrub-jays (Mexico through Washington) and Woodhouse Scrub-jays (Mexico, Nevada, Colorado). Whooping Cranes are more closely related to European Common Cranes and Japanese Red-crowned Cranes than they are to our Sandhill Cranes. The Red Crossbill has been split to add the Cassia Crossbill which lives in Idaho. The very common Thayer's Gull of the northwest has been merged into the Iceland Gull getting rid of one of the most difficult identifications around.

Anyone who has watched the Yellow-breasted Chats here in South Carolina for any length of time may have thought that they just don't look and act like normal warblers. Officially now they are not in the warbler family and aren't even closely related, sharing more similarities with some tropical groups than any other group we have in the United States. A major split of the Hawaiian Honeycreepers was made introducing 11 new species. This story is particularly sad as 9 of the 11 new species are already extinct while the other 2 are endangered due to disease, introduced fauna, habitat destruction, and climate change.

A personal interest of mine was the vote on Eastern and Western Willets both of which we have here on Hilton Head Island although at different times of year. It was a close vote with 6 yes for the split and 5 no with some of the no votes citing the need for more studies. I was a little disappointed but hopefully they will revisit the issue soon and give more weight to the genomics and less on song pattern.

While some of these changes may seem like inconveniences as they force us to relearn things we already knew, they can be quite instructive for how we approach birds. Past changes have told us things like how falcons are completely unrelated to hawks. This in turn may cause us to expect things like how different the two groups fly. This can then let us easily tell apart Merlins from Sharp-shinned Hawks when the birds are just barely more than specks in the distance. Lastly for anyone who was hoping that Ring-necked Ducks would be renamed to Ring-billed Ducks (the ducks have both rings, but the neck rings are harder to see), that proposal was unanimously rejected.

Robert

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

It has been a long, interesting and successful Spring/Summer for bird sightings in our area since last writing in May. In the Spring a total of 26 species of warblers and 17 other migrant species were sighted as well the arrival of our Summer species that some are beginning to leave as our early Fall species begin to arrive. Recent unusual finds included: Wilson's Phalarope, Black Tern, Cliff Swallow at Onslow Island of Savannah NWR and Common Ground Dove at Harbor Island.

Other Rare species sighted and reported since mid-May were: Gray-cheeked Thrush, Yellow-breasted Chat, Scarlet Tanager, Common Tern, Roseate Spoonbill, King Rail, Hooded Warbler, Gray Kingbird, Brown Creeper, and Broad-winged Hawk.

Out-Of-Season birds reported were: American Redstart, Black Scoter, Northern Waterthrush, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck and Ruddy Turnstone.



Spoonbill

Uncommon species were many and included: Piping and Wilson's Plovers, Wood Thrush, Reddish Egret, Yellow-throated and Blue-headed Vireos, Whimbrel, Yellow and Prairie Warblers, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Great Black-backed Gull, Indigo Bunting, Rose-breasted and Blue Grosbeaks, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eurasian-collared and Common Grounds Dove, Loggerhead Shrike, White-rumped, Stilt and Pectoral Sandpipers, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Bank Swallow, Northern Bobwhite, Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites, Peregrine Falcon, White-breasted Nuthatch, Glossy Ibis and Bank Swallow.

Other 'Good Finds' included: Red Knot, Orchard Oriole, Gull-billed Tern, Marbled Godwit, Cattle Egret, Black & White Warbler, Northern Parula and always, the Painted Bunting among others.

Many thanks to all reporting your bird sightings: Cindy/Ken Groff, Susan Murphy, Jane/Abe Hester, Dottie Bass, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Joanne McMenamin, Shelia/Roger Johnson, Dorothy Mosior, Kathy/Grant Greiger, Doreen Cubie, Miho Kinnas, Diana Churchill, Steve Calver, Russ Wigh, Buddy Campbell, Mary Alice Tartler, Nancy Male, Dick Phillips, Kay Grinnell, Bob Speare, Bob White, Debby Boots, Cherry Underwood and many visitors.

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' on Birding Friends!

Now is a best time of the year to go birding since our Fall migration is on ... and the transient migrants are moving through our area, the Winter birds are beginning to arrive and some of the Summer birds are still here but will be leaving soon!



Gray Kingbird



Wilson's Phalarope

Audubon Newhall Preserve reopens

Nine months after suffering extensive damage from Hurricane Matthew, the Audubon Newhall Preserve has reopened. Storm damage required extensive work to remove fallen trees, repair the fuel break, reinstall benches, replace damaged signs, create a new parking area, and clear general debris. Through the efforts of volunteers from the Hilton Head Audubon Society, Sea Pines, and the late Jack Greenshields, the preserve is now safe for visitors to enjoy. Some parts of the preserve have changed significantly and there is still some work to do, including the installation of a new entrance gate. We encourage visitors to visit the preserve and enjoy the beauty of Audubon Newhall which is located on Palmetto Bay Road. The Preserve is open from sunup to sunset.



Family Fun Day

On August 10th, the HHI Audubon Society participated in the annual Family Fun Day at the Coastal Discovery Museum. There were lots of kids and adults who stopped by. We especially appreciated the birds that so conveniently appeared allowing kids and adults to use the binoculars and take a closer look. We had several people who signed up for more info on our group. Thanks to Alan Biggs, Pauline Jones, and Carol Clemens for manning our display and helping our guests.

September Field Trip

Date: Saturday, September 2

Place: Sea Pines Forest Preserve, Hilton Head Island

Meeting Spot: Park Plaza Shopping Center, Office Park Road

Time: 8:00 am

Limit: 20 (currently there is a waiting list)

Leader: Bob Speare

With a variety of forest and freshwater habitats, the Forest Preserve represents a very good local birding site year-round. Throughout the early fall, migrating songbirds use the preserve as an important resting and feeding stopover, while many summer and permanent residents can also be easily found.

The Forest Preserve is still undergoing cleanup following the significant impact from Hurricane Mathew last year. We'll see how this site is recovering and how this event has created new opportunity for improved habitat management for wildlife.

This easy walk will be a terrific trip for new birders looking to learn about some of the songbirds and other forest bird species found on Hilton Head, along with wading birds, and possibly some raptors too.

For easy access through the Sea Pines gate on Greenwood Drive, we'll meet for carpooling at the Park Plaza Shopping Center, on Office Park Road, just outside the Sea Pines gate at 7:45 am.

To sign up for this field trip, please contact Bob Speare at bobspeare@gmail.com or 843-715-9772.



A Desperate Plea for Help

I'm sure everyone has seen the old military recruiting posters with the 'I Want You' slogan. Well at Audubon, we desperately want you. The Hilton Head Island Audubon Society runs on the backs of a few people who volunteer their time and effort to putting together a variety of programs, outings, communications, and projects that you participate in as well as making sure that the day-to-tasks like membership, organizational finances, and secretarial tasks.

This last year has been hard on HHI Audubon – we've lost Jack Greenshields who served several positions and was slated to be this year's President. We've also had several committee members who have had some health and time commitment issues that has affected their ability to handle their duties. But the bottom line is that the same few people have been doing all the work and for many years at a time. With a membership the size of ours, this is unfair and others must step up to help out.

So if you value Hilton Head Island Audubon, please seriously consider filling one of the below positions:

- 1) Vice-President: Currently Bill Nichol has graciously volunteered to fill in this position on an interim basis, but he has served this and the President role in the past. This position is intended to groom for the Presidency so you can help shape the focus and efforts of our chapter.
- 2) Secretary: Marianne Currie has filled this position for many years now and deserves and needs help. She is willing to assist someone to learn the position throughout the year and show the entire process. The position mostly entails attending our monthly board meetings and recording notes of the discussions.
- 3) Conservation: This was one of Jack Greenshield's positions and is currently vacant. You would inherit a conservation committee with a small core of dedicated members who have been helping with conservation issues on the island. We have a lot of people who like to alert us to conservation issues, but this is the position where you can truly make some of the changes needed to protect our natural resources.
- 4) Treasurer: Pauline Jones has been performing this role for several years. Pauline is looking for help from someone else to eventually take over this position. During this year, she is willing to show you the ropes and how to do all of the tasks necessary. This role is great for people with a good level of organization.

Again, please think twice if you can help with any of these roles – we truly need it. If you are interested, please contact the following people:

Vice-President or Conservation: Robert Rommel - rommel@robertrommel.com / 734-274-1796

Secretary: Marianne Currie - currie@hargray.com



2017 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT Susan Murphy, HHICBC@gmail.com

The 2017 Count is Friday, 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. If you are interested in being a part of this international effort, please e-mail me and

I will have an Area Captain contact you!

Our pre-count December Audubon meeting will be **Thursday, December 7.** We'll have a social at 7:00 pm and presentation at 7:30 pm. Once again it will be at First Presbyterian Church, 540 William Hilton Parkway. I am pleased to announce that our speaker will be Chapter President Robert Rommel.

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



Wanted: Individuals to Train as " Bird Rescuers / Transporters" For The Center For Birds of Prey

Recently, we (Kathy and Grant Greider) have become involved in a very satisfying activity – rescuing injured birds (usually birds of prey) on Hilton Head and sending them on their way to possible rehabilitation. We are working with the Center For Birds of Prey in Awendaw, SC.

Usually the process is that someone in the HHI area calls or is referred to the Center For Birds of Prey (CBOP) about an injured bird. If available we go to the site and pick up the bird – not too hard since the bird usually can't fly. We put it in a pet carrier box supplied by the center and take it to Maudie Owen in St Helena. Often, we meet at the Port Royal Sound Museum on SC170 so the trip is not too long for either of us.

So far, we have rescued 2 Red Shouldered Hawks, a Sharptailed Hawk, a Red - tailed Hawk, several Crows and a Greater Shearwater. Not all the birds survive, but they surely would die if left where they were found. When they are rehabilitated you have the option of being the one to release them where they were found. Very satisfying, indeed.

There is no pressure if you are unavailable. You just tell them you are unavailable and they will find someone else. There is a need for more volunteers for this program. Fran and Denny Baer are also transporters for our area.

Check out their website: www.thecenterforbirdsofprey.org to learn more about the Center. On March 8th we will have Daniel J. Prohaska, the Development Officer for the CBOP, at our monthly meeting to tell us about the CBOP. On April 19th Nancy Owen (Maudie) presents Creatures of the Night and will tell us about some of her experiences rescuing birds.

by Grant Greider

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Please save this for future reference:

What To Do If You Find An Injured Bird (from the CBOP website)

Call the Center for Birds of Prey at 843.971.7474 and press option #1 for the Injured Bird Line. The line is answered from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. every day of the week.

Carefully catch the bird. Wear gloves. Approach the bird slowly from the front and carefully pick it up, taking care to secure the legs and talons and to fold the wings against the body in their normal position. Alternately, you may approach from behind and cover the bird with a towel, blanket, or jacket and then pick it up as described.

If the bird is contained, do not offer food or water to the bird. The bird may not be strong enough to process solid food, even if it appears hungry; feeding could harm or even be fatal to the bird. Having food in its system may also preclude certain medical procedures that the bird may need.

Injured raptors require specialized treatment and care from a Federally-licensed, experienced practitioner. It is illegal to possess any migratory bird without state and federal permits. However, your temporary assistance is allowed in helping an injured bird reach proper care and doing so ensures its best chance for recovery and return to its natural environment.



Have you discovered BirdNote? BirdNote is a weekly email that describes itself as "Stories about birds, the environment and more!" If you sign up for this free newsletter, each Friday you will receive a very interesting message with short stories that you can listen to or just read. The bird sounds are clear and makes the stories come alive. A recent issue had the following:

When Birds Inspire Musicians - how Raymond Scott's work "The Penguin" was probably inspired by watching them in New York's Central park.

How Birds Stay Cool - panting, fluffing out feathers and other methods

How Birds are Tied to their Habitat - a great one to listen to, complete with birds sounds matched to their environment

Interested? To see more and to sign up, go to: <http://birdnote.org/birdnote-weekly-preview>

Help needed!

In addition to the areas discussed by Robert, we also need some "short term" help!

- We have had a donation from long time member Miriam Waterhouse of bird figurines/statuses. One is a very expensive, beautifully carved and painted statue of two green herons that Miriam purchased for over \$2,000. We are looking for someone or a team of folks willing to take all the items and set up a sale at meetings, on Ebay, Craig's list, raffle the green heron piece, or whatever you think would bring us the most benefits. We have a flash drive with photos of each piece, but need someone with creative "salesmanship" to take charge of the project. Can you help? Contact Carol C. at cclemens318@gmail.com
- Looking for folks to do walks at Audubon Newhall during the fall. Interested in more info? Contact: Bob Clemens at rclemens318@roadrunner.com

Membership Report for September 2017

Hi fellow birders!

Please welcome the following new members who have joined us since our last Ecobon was published. It is nice to see folks joining even during our summer hiatus.



- Suzy Colson**
- John Dryer**
- David Henderson**
- Sally Jessee**
- Harriet Jones**
- Ed and Mary Leary**

Remember that dues are based on a rolling calendar. 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 cclemens318@roadrunner.com or Fran at seatwo@roadrunner.com

Want to join? Need to renew? Please print this form and mail or bring to the next meeting with your dues. To contact us, email: hhiadubon@gmail.com

Local Membership: select either 1 year individual \$15 or 1 year family \$25

I wish to make an extra donation of _____(amount)

Last Name _____ First Name(s) _____

Address: _____ city _____ State _____ Zip _____

For LOCAL residents, please indicate your plantation/neighborhood such as Sea Pines, Indigo Run, Bluffton, Sun City etc. _____

Preferred phone: _____

Email: _____ (please print clearly!)

Can you help us with any of these activities on an as needed basis? Please check any of interest to you. Audubon Newhall Preserve Help with Field Trips Conservation Education Christmas Bird Count Publicity/Programs other

Please mail to: P.O. Box 6185 – Hilton Head Island, SC – 29938

For committee only: Renewal date _____ new _____ (revised 3/17)
National _____

Piping Plovers: Great Lakes Population and their Hilton Head Island Connection

Submitted by Fran Baer

In the current issue (August 2017) of BirdWatching Magazine, Sheryl DeVore has written a compelling article about the efforts to increase and stabilize the Great Lakes population of Piping Plovers (PIPL), only 75 nesting pairs resulting in 138 young in 2016. (This compares to 2000 pairs in the Northern Great Plains and approximately 2000 more along the Atlantic coast.

The majority of this PIPL population winters along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, from NC to TX, as well as into the Caribbean. Cumberland Island National Seashore in Georgia is a major wintering area. Some migrate over 1000 miles from the Upper Peninsula to the Bahamas, and they need stopover habitat along the way. Most Great Lakes plovers winter in South Carolina and Georgia.

A biologist with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Melissa (Bimbi) Chaplin, who has been working in these wintering habitats for about a decade, monitoring the Carolinas, Georgia, and the Caribbean, says "...the important thing is collect the data to show where there are negative impacts to the birds."

Per Melissa, Georgia's coastline is a lot less developed than in South Carolina. Georgia has a lot more undeveloped islands, accessible only by boat. In SC, there is a lot of recreation pressure in areas such as Hilton Head. In these more developed areas, used extensively for recreation, the plovers have a lower survival rate.

Melissa and her team have been banding plovers on Hilton Head and working to teach people that the beach is an ecosystem that provides a home for many living things. In addition, the Town of HHI conducts ongoing surveys of the plovers to monitor their winter roosting habits and habitats.

Quoting Melissa, "The future of Piping Plovers and other beach-dependent species of conservation concern would be a lot brighter if people embraced the idea of sharing the beach with plants and animals that live there. We can choose to be good stewards by respecting the needs of the living things that use the same sites we do."

Note: The above has been excerpted from BirdWatching magazine, August 2017 issue. © 2017 Madavore Media. Used by permission. (The article is entitled "A Ray of Hope"; the excerpted section is subtitled: Winter Haunts.)

Sheryl DeVore is a longtime contributor to BW magazine. She is the chief editor of Meadowlark, the quarterly magazine of the Illinois Ornithological Society, and the co-author of Birds of Illinois (Lone Pine Publishing 2001), and other books.





Festival Centre at Indigo Park
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HiltonHeadWBU@yahoo.com

- Bird Seed, Blends & Suet
- Bird Feeders & Houses
- Mounting Hardware
- Birdbaths & Accessories
- Binoculars & Field Guides
- Nature Books & Gifts

New Ownership / Same Location



Check out our new HH birding app!
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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.



Audubon

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SEPTEMBER ~ OCTOBER 2017 Calendar

SEPTEMBER

Sat. Sept. 2 Field Trip8:00 am
Sea Pines Forest Preserve

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

Thurs. Sept. 14 Monthly Meeting 3:00 pm

OCTOBER

Thurs. Oct. 5 Board Meeting at CCHH.....10:00 am

Thurs. Oct. 12 Monthly Meeting 3:00 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

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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.

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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.