



NOVEMBER 2017
No. 376

Ecobon

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

NOVEMBER PROGRAM *by: Dave Davis, Sun City Bird Club*

Thursday, November 9, 2017 3:00 ~ 4:15 pm at the Coastal Discovery Museum.

"Dragonflies of Hilton Head"

by Vicky McMillan, Biologist and Lecturer



Dragonflies are beautiful and familiar insects commonly observed near Hilton Head Island's many lagoons and waterways. This presentation, incorporating slides, specimens, and short videos, will introduce you to the biology of dragonflies and some common, easily identified species.

Vicky McMillan is a biologist specializing in dragonfly behavior and was formerly on the faculty of Colgate University, in Hamilton, New York. She lectures widely on dragonflies and Monarch butterflies and also writes the "Natural Lowcountry" column for the Island Packet.



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.

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

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Members-at-Large:

Christmas Bird Count Liason

Susan Murphy HHICBC@gmail.com

Ecobon Editor

Joan Wilson jobowill@hargray.com

Emeritus

Barry Lowes barlowe59@hotmail.com

Standing Committee Chairpersons:

Audubon Newhall Preserve

Bob Clemensrclemens318@roadrunner.com

Tom Hennesseytmhennessey@outlook.com

Bird Walks/Field Trips

Bob Speare bobspeare@gmail.com

Martha Worthymworthy2000@gmail.com

Conservation

To be appointed

Education

Grant Greider greider38@gmail.com

Vicky McMillan ... Vicky.mcmillan@gmail.com

Membership

Carol Clemens cclemens318@gmail.com

Fran Baer seatwo@roadrunner.com

Programs

Kathy Greider greider38@gmail.com

Alan Biggs alan.biggs2@gmail.com

Communications/Historian/Web site

Miho Kinnas miho.kinnas@gmail.com

Website: www.hiltonheadaudubon.org

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*

Getting the Most out of Your Feeders

It's the time of year that many of us are either looking to setup a new bird feeder or bring out the feeders that we've had in storage over the summer months. Feeders are a wonderful opportunity to see many of our resident and winter species as well as to observe some behaviors that we'd never get a chance to see otherwise. There are a few steps you can take to get the most out of your feeders.



First and foremost is to have a variety of food types. Different birds have different dietary requirements and nothing will increase the number of species you see more than increasing the types of food you have. Offering small and large seeds, nuts, nectar, suet, and mealworms. For those who may have an aversion to insects, I find the dried mealworms work just as well as live ones in the Hilton Head area once the birds find it. Mealworms will attract some of our most colorful birds including bluebirds, orioles, and warblers so please consider adding them if you haven't already.

The second key is the placement of your feeders. Placing them near significant cover like the edge of a forest will put the birds at ease and protect them from predators. If you have multiple feeders, spacing them out and even keeping them out of the line of sight of each other can do wonders since territorial bully birds won't be able to stop others from feeding. This is especially important with hummingbird feeders.



The last key is to have patience. It takes birds some time to find a new food source and make it part of their daily routine. I strongly recommend having at least one open tray-style feeder to let the birds easily see the food source. Some bird species will only feed from tray-style feeders. If you have any questions about feeders, feel free to ask. Also, I'm sure that they can answer many of your questions about food and feeders at the island Wild Birds Unlimited. Enjoy the birds that come to your feeder this winter - I know I will!

Robert

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Our area is having a very good Fall migration so far! Twenty-two warbler species have been reported as well as twenty-three other species of transient migrants. Many of our Winter songbirds and ducks are also beginning to show up. Our Fall migration is a little late this year and we have yet to see the large volume of migrant birds we normally see.

'Accidental' sightings reported in the last month were: Red-Necked Phalarope at Onslow Island of Savannah NWR and Cave Swallow at Lake Mayer in Savannah, GA.

'Rare' sightings reported during were: Wilson's Phalarope, migrant Tennessee, Wilson's, Chestnut-sided, Hooded, Nashville and Cape May Warblers, Black Tern, Clay-colored Sparrow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, migrant Solitary Sandpipers, King Rail and Roseate Spoonbill.



Cave Swallow



Cape May Warbler

Uncommon species were many and include: Veery, Endangered Piping Plover, Reddish Egret, migrant Ovenbird, Magnolia, Yellow and Prairie Warblers, migrant Northern Waterthrush, Bob White, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Least Bittern, Wood Thrush, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, Bobolink, Whimbrel, Eurasian-Peregrine Falcon, Loggerhead Shrike, Stilt and Pectoral Sandpipers, Caspian Tern, Wilson's Plover, Long-billed Dowitcher, American Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Purple Gallinule, Mottled Duck, White-breasted Nuthatch, Glossy Ibis and Bank Swallow.

Other notable or 'Good Finds' include: Black-throated Blue, beautiful Prothonotary, Yellow-throated, Black & White, early Palm and Yellow-rumped Warblers, migrant American Restart, Bobolink, Eastern Phoebe, early Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Gray Catbird, Gull-billed Tern, early Northern Flicker, Cattle Egret, Spotted Sandpiper, Sora and always Painted Bunting and Ruby-throated Hummingbird 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, Alan Biggs, Kathy/Grant Greiger, Doreen Cubie, Carmen Sesa, Diana Churchill, Steve Calver, Russ Wigh, Dorothy Mosier, Buddy Campbell, Mary Alice Tartler, Dick Phillips, Bob Speare, Martha Worth, Debby Boots 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 bird finds'on Birding Friends.



Red-necked Phalarope

Fall is a best time of the year to bird! Plan to take a birding trip or walk soon!

9/11 Tribute in Light Reveals How City Lights Affect Migration

A new study provides the most compelling evidence yet that artificial lights cause radical changes in the behavior of birds migrating at night. Using radar data and observations during the Tribute of Light in New York City, researchers from the University of Oxford, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and New York City Audubon found densities of birds were up to 150 times higher over lower Manhattan when the tribute was illuminated. The birds dissipated when the lights were turned off.

Bright nighttime lighting poses problems for birds, even in rural areas. "We recommend building lights be turned off for as much of the night as possible, but at least from midnight to dawn during migration season," says study coauthor Susan Elbin of New York City Audubon. "This is true for areas around homes as well as other brightly lit areas such as sports stadiums, construction sites, offshore oil rigs, and large buildings. Migrating is already hard enough for birds without this added danger from artificial light at night."

(from The CornellLab)



November Field Trip

Date: Saturday, November 4 at 8:30 am

Place: Fish Haul Creek Park, Hilton Head Island

Meeting Spot: Parking lot at Fish Haul Creek

Limit: 20

Leader: Robert Rommel, *HHI Audubon President, author, and photographer*

Fish Haul Creek Park is without question one of the birding gems on Hilton Head Island. Located along the Port Royal Sound, many bird types take advantage of the varied habitats found there. Among these habitats are the salt marsh, beach and associated mud flats, which provide important feeding and resting sites for migrating shorebirds as well as terns, skimmers, oystercatchers and waders. This will be a terrific morning to learn how to identify these coastal birds along with others in the surrounding maritime forest. Water-proof boots, bug spray, and sunscreen are recommended. We'll have a spotting scope on hand, but feel free to bring one if you'd like.

This walk is free to Hilton Head Audubon members,
\$5 for non-members.

Directions: Fish Haul Creek Park is located on Beach City Road. From William Hilton Parkway, turn onto Beach City Road and follow about 2 miles to the four-way stop. Proceed straight ahead and the park entrance will be on the right.

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

FIELD TRIP information is also available on the web-site <http://www.hiltonheadaudubon.org/audubon-outings>

Birding 101

January 6, 13, 20 and 27
9:30 am to 11:30 am

Coastal Discovery Museum in
the New Discovery Room

Learn about the birds you
see on your island

Identifying Birds

Feeding Birds

Shorebirds

Backyard Birds

Raptors and more

If interested contact
greider38@gmail.com

Free for members
\$5 Cost for non-members
per week

Audubon Newhall Preserve

After a successful September work day, the Sea Pines CSA delivered three more truckloads of mulch to the parking area, with more to be placed around the pond. Once we have all of the needed mulch in place, another work day will be scheduled to spread mulch and consolidate brush piles for removal.

With the Board's approval, we have started to retire our older, more decrepit benches, with the plan being to transfer plaques to newer benches, or some appropriate display for the prior donors.

Plans are proceeding, as quickly as the Town and Sea Pines permitting processes allow, to ultimately install a beautiful new gate for the Preserve. The new gate will be set back a bit from the current fence line, and will consist of wrought iron gate panels mounted on brick columns.



Finally, if the Board approves, Bob Clemens will remove the "interim" adjective from his title as Chair of the Audubon Newhall Preserve, and three new Vice-Chairs will continue in supportive roles. Rita Kernan has agreed to serve as Vice-Chair for Plants and Guided Walks; Tom Hennessey as Vice-Chair for Sea Pines CSA Coordination and Special Projects; and Matt Matoon will serve as Vice-Chair for Maintenance and Foliage Management.

FRESH WATER FOR OCEAN BIRDS

Where do birds like albatrosses that spend months at a time over the ocean get fresh water? Seabirds have adaptations that allow them to drink saltwater and then rid themselves of the excess salt. They have glands (known variously as salt glands, supraorbital glands, or nasal glands) near their eyes that extract salt from the blood stream, and the super-salty liquid exits through grooves in the skull that leads to their nostrils. The biochemical process that extracts the salt is quite complex and wasn't understood and described in the scientific literature until 1958.

(from Bird Watcher's Digest)



A BIRD BY ANY OTHER NAME

A number of birds have been known throughout the years by different names. The magnificent frigatebird was called the man-o-war bird back in the 1950's, and the loggerhead shrike is known as the butcherbird. Many people call the scissor-tailed flycatcher the bird of paradise, and several birds have had name changes in recent years, such as the olivaceous cormorant that became the neotropic cormorant, the Louisiana heron that became the tricolor heron, and the Mexican crow that is now called the Tamaulipas crow.

Name changes are nothing new in the bird world. During the Civil War, Benjamin F. McIntyre, a Union soldier, was stationed in Brownsville, Texas. He reported in his diary, "This place seems the home of hundreds of flocks of 'daws', a bird resembling our northern blackbird, but much larger and tame." It was later determined that these birds were boat-tailed grackles, which were also called chucks or crow blackbirds.

(from Bird Watcher's Digest)

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 November 2017

Hi fellow birders!

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



Ken and Barb Adams
part timers here from Plattsburgh, NY

Brian and Avie Ellis

Donna Roberts

Ann Wiesner

Remember, your dues are good for one year from the month we processed your membership. Email reminders are sent out in the quarter your dues should be renewed. Have membership questions or need to update your information? Contact your membership team.

Your membership team:

Carol Clemens: cclemens318@roadrunner.com

and Fran Baer: 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 _____

2017 Christmas Bird Count

This is the 118th year for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Here is some information from the latest published count data, the 116th count: The CBC has grown to more than 2,500 15-mile diameter count circles in the Western Hemisphere! There were 76,669 observers counting 58,878,071 birds and 2,607 species, roughly one-quarter of the world's known avifauna! 646 species were counted in the U.S.

Of course, the value of the CBC data is in the population numbers, long-term trends and documentation of shifting ranges. We are an important part of gathering this data in the largest and longest-running citizen science project in the world. Last year our 254 participants counted 130 species and 25,353 birds. Those numbers are lower than recent years so it will be interesting to see what this year brings!

Count Day: Friday, December 15, for the Hilton Head area.

We spread out across Hilton Head, Pinckney and Daufuskie Islands, parts of Bluffton and our waterways to identify species and count each bird we see or hear in our circle. Captains of our 18 areas are putting their teams together. We always welcome more participants, so if you are interested in being a part of this international effort, please e-mail me and I will have a Captain contact you! You do not have to be an accomplished birder. Start out as the recorder or as the photographer in a more experienced group! It is a fun day, even if sometimes the weather does not cooperate. Enjoy exploring local habitat and sharing the wonder of finding our feathered friends with fellow birding enthusiasts. You can also participate from the comfort of home by being one of our Feeder Watchers.

For more information and forms, visit the website at:
<http://www.hiltonheadaudubon.org/audubon-christmas-bird-count>

~ Help Wanted ~

As of this writing, we have a couple of specific needs for the count. We have a boat that needs another birder knowledgeable of shorebirds. Also, we are building a small team for Palmetto Bluff. The team starts at 6:30 am and rides on the trucks with the naturalists from the Palmetto Bluff Conservancy. The staff can identify the waterfowl, but we need a few experienced birders to go with our new team leader. They finish the count about noon. Jane Hester has led this count for many years and is putting the team together: "It is a magical experience!"

December Meeting:

***Our annual Christmas Bird Count meeting is on Thursday, December 7,
at First Presbyterian Church, 540 William Hilton Parkway.***

We'll gather in Fellowship Hall for refreshments at 7:00 pm. The presentation, "Christmas Birds Highlights," by Robert Rommel, begins at 7:30 pm. Coffee will be provided, and we invite our generous members to bring cookies, cakes and other goodies! This meeting is free and open to the public. Bring your friends!

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.

Susan Murphy
CBC Coordinator, Hilton Head
HHICBC@gmail.com

Audubon



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NOVEMBER ~ DECEMBER 2017 Calendar

NOVEMBER

Thurs. Nov. 2 Board Meeting at CCHH.....10:00 am
 Sat. Nov. 4 Field Trip - Fish Haul Creek Park8:30 am
 Thurs. Nov. 9 Monthly Meeting 3:00 pm

DECEMBER

Thurs. Dec. 7 Annual CBC Meeting7:00 pm
 at First Presbyterian Church
 Fri. Dec. 15 Christmas Bird Count Day All Day

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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.