

March 2010
No. 308

ECOBON



Newsletter of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society
Audubon Refuge Keepers

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Bill Nicol

The following is an update on the nominating committee effort to recruit a slate of officers for the 2010-2011 meeting year. So far the committee has some success. They have managed to recruit a Treasurer, Annette Hausman, and the Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, Marianne Currie and Sherman Barker, have agreed to serve again. We still need to recruit a President and Vice-President. The successful operation of our chapter depends on our members volunteering to fill these important positions. We need new members with fresh, different ideas to step forward to help us progress.

We still have several Committees that need a chairperson. Charlotte White will step down as Program Chair but has agreed to take over as the Christmas Bird Count Chair for next year. The Program Chair is a key position and coordinates the programs we offer our members during the meeting year. We also have existing vacancies for the Publicity and Sales Table Chairs. All of these committees are important for the effective and successful operation of our chapter.

If you choose to help out with any of these positions, you will not be left alone. All members of the Board will assist in any way they can to make you successful. They will not tell you what to do but will provide guidance. If you have any questions or can fill any of these positions please contact any of the existing Board Members.

See you at the meeting and please bring a friend.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM *by Charlotte White*

Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 7:30 p.m. at the Seabrook

The Galapagos Archipelago

We are in for a treat for our March Audubon program! Our own Audubon members, John and Dianne Faucette, will present a slide show and informative discussion about their November cruise through the Galapagos Islands. This archipelago visit included twice-daily Zodiac trips to individual islands where they climbed lava flows and steep dunes, and hiked through mangroves, shrub thickets and rocky shores to see and photograph animals that are unique to the Galapagos. The audience will see Blue-footed Boobies, Red-billed Tropic birds, Magnificent Frigate birds with their big red pouches, and Flightless Cormorants as well as other animals such as Green Sea Turtles mating, Marine Iguanas, and the famous Galapagos Tortoises.

John and Dianne moved to Hilton Head in 1999 after careers in Atlanta. Dianne immediately began to use a digital camera to, as she puts it, "capture every possible sighting and event on the island." John and Dianne have completed South Carolina and Georgia Master Naturalist courses and constantly observe and photograph natural life in the Lowcountry. They advance their passion for seeing and photographing the natural world with learning from books, sound tracks, field trips and, of course, supporting each other. Dianne's photography has won many awards, has been featured in newspapers and photography shows and has been used for permanent displays. Dianne also gives demonstration classes on photography skills and maintains a really stunning nature web site: www.frauleindi.com/HiltonHeadNature.htm

To participate in this exciting March program, do several things: Check out the above web site as well as her journal entry for the Galapagos trip at: www.frauleindi.com/HiltonHeadNature/NatureJournal/Galapagos.htm Then come to the meeting on Tuesday, March 9, WITH A FRIEND, at 7:30 p.m. at the Seabrook, 300 Woodhaven Drive, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Don't miss this big treat!

BIRD SEED SALE NEEDS HELP BY MARCH 13



The response in January was very strong with nearly 30 buyers and donors, bringing in nearly \$1000 net gain. We thank each and every supporter for their assistance. Our target is to fund the Audubon Adventures programs in our local school system, by Mary Jane Major our Education Chairman, working with nearly 30 teachers. Our annual expense is about \$2000 so we are HALF-WAY THERE. If you have not yet made a seed purchase or donation to this drive, please HELP! The order forms are in the Email Ecobon and at the March 9th monthly meeting and at Wild Birds Unlimited in Indigo Park. This is the best opportunity to get great bird seeds & mixtures and also support a program that reaches over 1000 of our school children each year.

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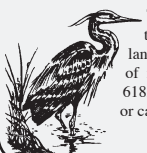
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<i>Adopt-A-Refuge (Pinckney)</i>	
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<i>Audubon Newhall Preserve</i>	
Joan Shulman	842-9246
<i>Bird Walks/Field Trips</i>	
Kay Hodnett	342-7485
<i>Bird House Construction</i>	
Jim Currie	681-8525
<i>Bird Seed Sale</i>	
Ed Nash	681-5725
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	
Barry Lowes	671-3537
<i>Education</i>	
Mary Jane Major	342-5804
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Marianne Currie	681-8525
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	
Joan Wilson	837-2874
<i>Programs</i>	
Charlotte White	837-4597
<i>Publicity & Public Relations</i>	
OPEN	
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<i>Sun City Representative</i>	
Kevin Cahill	705-3570
<i>Wetlands/Conservation</i>	
Sally Krebs	H: 757-2973 O: 341-4690

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 call one of the above officers or chairpersons.

FIELD TRIP TO SAVANNAH NWR

Twenty Auduboners ventured over to the Savannah NWR on 1/26/10 and sighted 53 bird species on sunny but cool and windy day.

The highlight of the day was the return of a Great Horned Owl to nest in a large oak tree at the entrance of the refuge like it had done for years until 3-4 years ago. The owl should be there until its owlets have fledged in several months.

All the normal winter ducks were seen plus a few less common ones like the American Wigeon, Mottled Duck and Gadwall plus the more common Northern Shoveler, Mallard, Green and Blue-winged Teals, Bufflehead, Lesser Scaup and Ring-necked Duck.

Other good birds included: Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Glossy Ibis, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, American Robin, Song and Savannah Sparrows and flocks of Eastern Meadowlarks and Cedar Waxwings plus common species.

Also, an uncommon American Bittern was seen on a preview trip there on 1/24 but was missed on the group trip on 1/26.

NEW 'IMPORTANT BIRD AREA' SOURCE OF PRIDE, OBLIGATION

Efforts by the Fripp Island Audubon chapter and a Hilton Head Island retiree set examples for all of us.

Birds play a major role in the joy of life in the Lowcountry. And today we note moments of sadness and pride for those who appreciate our birds and work to protect them.

We mourn the death of Larry Waterhouse of Hilton Head Island, who twice served as president of the Hilton Head Audubon chapter. He worked for the Whooping Crane Conservancy in Hilton Head Plantation and the local land bank. But our favorite image of Larry is one we published in the newspaper, his beaming face beside his beaming slide projector, teaching young children to appreciate birds. Larry now is flying free from the chains of Lou Gehrig's Disease.

The pride comes from the National Audubon Society's designation of Beaufort's barrier islands as an "Important Bird Area".

We thank the Fripp Island Audubon chapter for observing, documenting and appreciating the value these six islands have to many species of birds, some of them endangered.

The club, founded in 1978 by Fripp resident Dixie Winter, led the effort for the designation intended to identify and protect habitat for local and migrating birds.

The designation does not guarantee legal protection, but it can be used as leverage to direct conservation resources to areas that need it most. Fripp's club president said bird inventories would aid national research efforts, which are used to set priorities on preserving bird habitat.

"With continual management and protection, the Beaufort Barrier Islands Important Bird Area will remain a haven for birds in perpetuity", said Ann Shahid of Audubon South Carolina and coordinator of the South Carolina Important Bird Area Program.

She points to the need for mankind to be good stewards of Harbor, Hunting, Fripp, Pritchard's, Capers and Old islands.

"Although humans live on and frequent three of the six islands, it is possible for birds and humans to continue to coexist," she said. "Spring nesting season will be a vital time to keep humans and pets away from the nesting areas. During spring and fall migration birds need protection while refueling for their long flights."

This is a good reminder that the joys of Lowcountry life come with an obligation by all residents. Larry Waterhouse and the Fripp Island Audubon give us good examples to follow and a sense of pride.

Article courtesy of the *Island Packet*

NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Joan Shulman

Thank you to Mary Jane and Bob Major for being Trail Monitors in February.

We will have a WORK DAY in the Preserve on Saturday, March 13, from 9:00 A.M. until noon or so. The Audubon Newhall Preserve Committee asks for your help to make the Preserve look its best for the start of our Spring walks. Bring gloves, clippers, loppers, rakes, and energy. (Don't think we'll need bug spray unless it warms up really fast.) Any amount of time you can give us is greatly appreciated. (Call me at 842-9246 if you have questions.)

Our Spring walks start on March 31 at 10:00 A.M. The title of the first one is "Native Plants and Unique Habitats on a Sea Island." Betty Treen, a Master Gardener and experienced docent, will identify the flowers, plants, shrubs, and trees unique to the lowcountry. She will also talk about the history of the Preserve and point out the special ecological systems found there. For more information, call 842-9246. Adults, \$7.00; Children under 12, Free; Maximum per family, \$14.00.

Two more walks are scheduled in April.

Toward the end of March or early in April, check on the Cherokee Rose at the junction of the Pond and North Woods trails. It should be coming into bloom by then.

About the same time, take a look at the Eastern Redbud tree at the right side of the parking lot to see if it is in bloom. It is also called the Judas tree because it is related to the species of tree in the Mediterranean from which Judas hanged himself. According to legend, the flowers of the tree were originally white and turned red from shame, or in another version, from the blood of Jesus. The flowers can be put into salads and fritters.

JUST A REMINDER

Birdhouses have a limited lifespan, so check yours to make sure that time, weather, and our friendly squirrels have not taken their toll on it. This is a good time to replace old houses and install new ones so your feathered friends will have a cozy place to shelter this winter, and a nice fresh abode for next spring's nesting season. A nice birdhouse also makes a very nice gift.



RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Winter has cooled off with a dusting of unusual snow on HHI and is progressing very well after a successful CBC (150 bird species found) and the sighting of very rare "first ever" Whooping Cranes at Donnelley WMA. Late winter birds like the American Goldfinch are finally showing up in large numbers.

Hummingbirds are the hot items this month! Dottie Bass has hosted two hummers all winter that were identified as a rare Black-chinned and a Ruby-throated. Miriam Waterhouse is also hosting a hummer, thought to be an overwintering Ruby-throated but is awaiting positive identification and banding.

Rare birds reported during the month included: American White Pelican (two sightings) on HHI, unusual and overwintering Kentucky Warbler in Moss Creek, Black, Virginia and King Rails at Savannah NWR and Glaucous Gull, Purple Sandpiper, Common Merganser and Lesser Black-backed Gull at Tybee Island.

Uncommon birds sighted were: Out-of-season Swallow-tailed Kite, Baltimore Oriole, American Bittern, Red Knot, Piping Plover, Northern Gannet, Red-throated Loon, both Sharp-tailed and Seaside Sparrows, Sedge Wren, Canvas-back, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike and Rusty Blackbird. Other good finds reported were: American Wigeon, Yellow-throated Warbler, Bonaparte's and Greater Black-backed Gulls, many Robins and Waxwings foraging for berries and many Bald Eagles (a record 45 on the CBC).

A thank you to all reporting their sightings: Dianne/John Faucette, Jim Grove, Annette Houseman, Peter Zachmann, Kay Hodnett, Doris Stoner, Carol Clemens, Miriam Waterhouse, Dottie Bass, Nan Lloyd, Fran Baer, Richard Shulman, Mary Jane Major, Joe/Rita Kernan, Bev Snider, Wendy Hansen and several visitors.

To report a rare, uncommon, first-of-the-year or season or out-of-season bird sighting, please e-mail: Birding-Friends@yahoo.com or call 290-1508. Please state your name, date and location of your sighting and any appropriate comments.

CHAPTER HISTORY

Thanks to the help of many members, we have almost completed the collection of all the Ecobons for our files. The copies still missing are 151, 152, 153, 154, 158, 178, 181, 187, 193, 206. The years are probably 1992, 96, 97, 98. If you are a "saver" and might have these copies, please call Betsy Pehrson at 689-2243. If you do not want to part with your copies, I will be happy to make copies for the file. Thank you!

INTERESTING BOOK NEWS

by Ed Nash

Barry Lowes recently gave an illustrated (with bird slides) review of the book "Songbird Journeys" by Miyoko Chu, of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. This book, published in 2006, has sound analysis of the ways and means of bird migrations, based upon scientific studies. Why do birds migrate each spring and fall? How do they navigate? What is their means of flying hundreds of miles non-stop? This book examines the lives of songbirds over a full year, with details of their activities during each season. Historical information and full color bird pictures round out the amazing abilities and habits of these tiny creatures. (Approx. 300 pages).

MORE INTERESTING BOOK NEWS

An enduring classic, "The Outermost House", by Henry Beston is an account of 12 months living in a beach house on Cape Cod. This book was published in 1928, and apparently covers his experiences of a then-recent year, although that does not seem to be specifically identified. Beston (1888-1968) was a naturalist and birding enthusiast who had a sturdy cottage built on a 20 foot sand dune just 30 feet from the high tide line. What started out as a two week summer vacation turned into a great 12 month adventure, with picturesque descriptions throughout. (Approx. 175 pages).

WHOOPING CRANES AT DONNELLEY

Five brave Auduboners head out to Donnelley WMA in freezing weather on 1/26 on a mission to sight a life bird, the Whooping Crane.

Mission accomplished a few hours later at Donnelley with much excitement when the group located two beautiful adult Whoopers on their scopes.

These huge white birds (tallest in the North America at 52") were found some 500-600 yards out in an impoundment in the water with many other shorebirds and ducks. The Whoopers were easily identifiable by their large size and the red coloring on their head and face as well as their black wing tips observed when one of the birds flapped its wings. Both birds had large red and white plastic bands on their legs for identification and following their individual history.

These birds were the adult Whoopers that have been coming to Donnelley and the ACE Basin for the past several years but have been difficult at times to locate. Before then the last Whooping Crane reported in South Carolina was in 1850. These birds were part of a program to reintroduce Whoopers in the USA that could only be seen wintering in the Southwest before then.

Our birders left Donnelley at mid morning very happy with such a great find!

Good Birding, Jack C. HHI, SC

E-MAIL Reminder

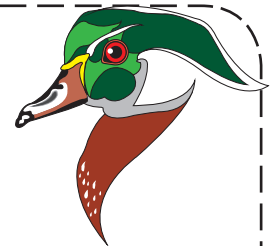
Have you sent your E-mail address in to Nan?

If not, please send it to Nan at nan@nanhiltonhead.com.

PLEASE NOTE: Current members are encouraged to use this membership form to sign up friends, relatives, and neighbors as new members. Our Chapter benefits significantly from a "return of dues" from National if our local form is used for new memberships

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER

MEMBERSHIP FORM	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 YR. - \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 YRS. - \$30
NEW MEMBERS ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 YR. - \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 YRS. - \$30
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Mail a check payable to **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**

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Thank You!

Special thanks to Virginia Culter, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited for donating 2 quality feeders, a 9 foot shepherd's hook, and quality bird feed to establish a feeder station for the HHI Middle School sixth grade science classes of Ms Westphal, Exley, and Lonz. Inspired by Virginia's generous donation, our HHI Audubon donated a squirrel baffle, feeder tray, and bird bath to complete the station. With the feeder station outside the classroom windows, students are able to participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count from their science classrooms. Thanks to Audubon members Marianne Currie, Joan and Richard Shulman, and Mary Jane Major for making GBBC presentations to over 150 students at Hilton Head Prep and HHI Middle School.



*We lost two prominent members of our
Audubon chapter recently:
Doris McCullough and Larry Waterhouse.
They will be sadly missed.*

*Memorials have been received and any future
memorials can be mailed to the Treasurer,
Fran Baer, at P. O. Box 6185.*

Place your ad here!

Call Bill Nicol
for more information
671-4721

2010 HILTON HEAD AUDUBON BIRD FOOD SALE & EDUCATION PROGRAM SUPPORT

***** FROM SATURDAY JANUARY 2 THRU SATURDAY MARCH 14, 2010 *****

Net Sale Proceeds Will Assist Local Audubon Chapter BIRD & NATURE Education Programs

The Hilton Head Audubon Society sponsors this annual Bird Food Sale to raise money to help support the Boys & Girls Club, give Audubon Adventure nature programs to the middle schools, and to help the Pinckney Nature Preserve. These and similar projects are indeed the mission and objectives of this totally non-profit organization. You may buy cheaper bird food, but you cannot buy any better, cleaner or more conveniently. Thanks to the Hilton Head Wild Birds Unlimited store in Indigo Park, a substantial portion of your purchase price helps support our programs.

PREMIUM OIL SUNFLOWER--This is 100 % black sunflower seed. Favorite of cardinals, goldfinch, chickadees, titmice, woodpeckers, mourning doves, and many others. Nearly an all-purpose food! (Needs protection from squirrels)

SUNFLOWER CHIPS--No hulls! This is a cleaner feeding option for the above birds. Good for decks & walkways.

SUPREME BLEND--Contains 75 % sunflower seed, 15 % safflower seed and 10 % sunflower chips.

DELUXE BLEND--Contains 50 % sunflower seed, 35 % millet, and 15 % safflower seed. Great feeder mix.

SAFFLOWER SEED--Liked by cardinals, chickadees, nuthatches, towhees, but NOT liked by squirrels and black birds.

THISTLE (NIGER)--Preferred by many goldfinches and sparrows.

NEW FINCH MIX -- Contains niger plus sunflower chips.

NO-MESS S0. EAST MIX--Contains sunflower chips & shelled peanuts (NO millet). Ideal to use near steps & walks.

CRACKED CORN--Liked by many birds, nearly same as sunflower. (Needs protection from squirrels.)

SHELLED PEANUT HEARTS--Liked by finches, juncos, sparrows, titmice and starlings. (Also squirrels).

****NOTE THE LOWER PRICES!****

Name: _____ Phone No. _____ Date _____

Address _____ eMail Address _____

<u>MIXTURE</u>	<u>WEIGHT</u>	<u>PRICE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
PREMIUM OIL SUNFLOWER	20 lbs.	\$22.00	_____	\$ _____
	5 lbs	5.50	_____	_____
SUNFLOWER CHIPS (NO Hulls)	20 lbs	45.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	11.50	_____	_____
SUPREME BLEND	20 lbs.	24.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	6.00	_____	_____
DELUXE BLEND	20 lbs.	22.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	5.50	_____	_____
SAFFLOWER SEED	20 lbs.	28.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	7.00	_____	_____
THISTLE SEED (Niger)	20 lbs	41.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	10.00	_____	_____
NEW FINCH MIX (No Hulls)	20 lbs.	35.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	9.00	_____	_____
NO-MESS S.E. MIX (No Hulls)	20 lbs.	40.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	10.00	_____	_____
CRACKED CORN	20 lbs	12.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	3.00	_____	_____
SHELLED PEANUTS	20 lbs	31.00	_____	_____
	5 lbs	8.00	_____	_____

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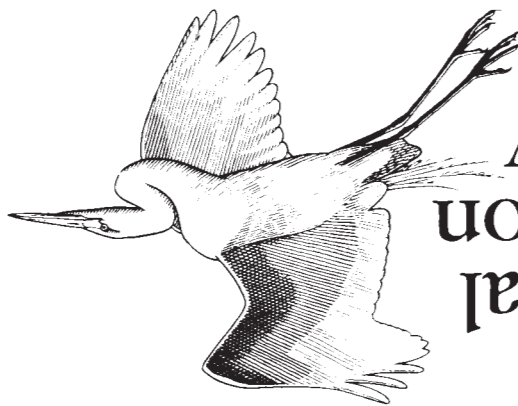
PLAN B: NO BIRD SEED, BUT I WISH TO DONATE TO THE EDUCATION FUND: \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Make check out to: HHI Audubon Society and mail with this form to: Ed Nash, 27 Scarborough Hd, HHI, SC 29928,
- OR- Take this form & check to Wild Birds Unlimited in Indigo Park and place your Audubon order with them.

***** BUY NOW and PICK UP LATER AS NEEDED *****

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER AND SUPPORT



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MARCH ~ APRIL 2010 Calendar

MARCH

- Thurs. Mar. 4 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Sat. Mar. 6 **Grand Opening**, by Invitation Only
Friends of Coastal Savannah Wildlife Refuges
- Tues. Mar. 9 **Monthly Meeting** at the Seabrook 7:30 pm

APRIL

- Thurs. Apr. 8 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Tues. Apr. 13 **Monthly Meeting** at the Seabrook 7:30 pm

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 Monthly meetings of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society are regularly scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, September through May, in the Auditorium at the Seabrook, 300 Woodhaven Drive. Members and guests welcome!



B E Q U E S T S

If you wish to honor a family member or friend with a memorial gift, or remember the Audubon Ne-whall 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.