

March 2011
No. 317

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, lead by Clem Dietze, to recruit a slate of officers for the 2011-2012 meeting year. So far the committee has been successful. They have managed to recruit a President, Natalie Hefter, Vice-President, Clem Dietze, Treasurer, John Faucette, and Recording Secretary, Marianne Curry. The position of Corresponding Secretary remains unfilled. We would like to have at least three new Members-At-Large to help run the club. 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. The Program Chair, a key position that coordinates the programs we offer our members during the meeting year, has been vacant this year. We also have existing vacancies for the Publicity and Sales Table Chairs. Some of our Board Members are doing double duty and could use some help. 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.



MARCH PROGRAM *by Clem Dietze*

Thursday, March 10, 2011, 3:00 p.m. at Honey Horn in Sea Island Room

Our guest speaker is David Harter. David is well known on Hilton Head and throughout the lowcountry. The owner of Glidden Paints on Hilton Head and in Bluffton and Beaufort, David is respected both as a business man and dedicated environmental and community advocate. He has received awards since his arrival on Hilton Head in 1979 including Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Year and Rotary International's Paul Harris Fellow.

David has been a member of The Greater Island Committee since 1991 and currently is Board Chairman of both the Beaufort County chapter of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America and Big People for Little People Agency. He is an instructor for Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at USCB, on the Dolphin/Wahoo advisory panel for South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council, board member of South Carolina Wildlife Federation, President since 1995 of the Hilton Head Sport Fishing Club, Vice chairman and projects director for the Hilton Head Reef Foundation, member Beaufort County Clean Water Task Force, founding member of the Port Royal Sound Conservancy, and current board chairman for Friends of the Rivers. He is also the South Carolina representative to NOAA Fisheries North Atlantic Right Whale Recovery Plan Implementation Team, an authorized South Carolina game fish tagger, member of the oversight committee for Beaufort County Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) and a U.S. Coast Guard licensed captain. There are others but space limits the listing. David's volunteer commitments put most of us to shame and I am gratified to call him my friend.

His presentation is on The Port Royal Sound Estuarine System. This is one of North America's greatest and most important marine ecosystems. Its unique features provide a fertile, pristine, and abundant nursery that is important to marine life throughout the Southeast all the way to the Gulf Stream. Understanding these features and the special rules and institutions needed to protect them and its wildlife will be critical tests of our own political will and forced self reliance.

One of David's favorite quotations is from Abraham Lincoln. "I like to see a man proud of the place in which he lives. I like to see a man live so that his place will be proud of him".



Photo courtesy of Fran Baer

HHI Audubon

Board of Directors:

<i>President</i>	
Bill Nicol	671-4721
<i>Vice President</i>	
Clem Dietze	837-2612
<i>Treasurer</i>	
Fran Baer	686-6348
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	
Marianne Currie	681-8525
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	
Sherman Barker	342-6596
<i>Members-at-Large</i>	
Howard Costa	842-9447
Jim Currie	681-8525
Natalie Hefter	757-9789
Barry Lowes	837-3537
Nan Lloyd	363-2092
Joan Wilson	837-2874

Committee Chairpersons:

<i>Adopt-A-Refuge (Pinckney)</i>	
Clem Dietze	837-2612
<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>	
Charlotte White	837-4597
<i>Education</i>	
Mary Jane Major	342-5804
<i>Historian</i>	
Betsy Pehrson	689-2243
<i>Hospitality</i>	
Thea Luba	785-3214
<i>Legislation</i>	
Sherman Barker	342-6596
<i>Membership</i>	
Thea Luba	785-3214
<i>Newsletter Circulation</i>	
Marianne Currie	681-8525
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	
Joan Wilson	837-2874
<i>Programs</i>	
Open	
<i>Publicity & Public Relations</i>	
OPEN	
<i>Shorebirds/Conservation</i>	
Howard Costa	842-9447
<i>Sun City Representative</i>	
Diane Rand	987-1111
<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.



MARCH FIELD TRIP *by Nan Lloyd*

Little St. Simons Island

Just off the northern tip of St Simons Island is a privately owned, 10,000 acre island uninhabited except for a small, exclusive lodge. Nan Lloyd is organizing a day trip for Monday March 21st. The cost is \$80 per person which includes round trip boat fare (10:30 AM – 4:30 PM), ground transportation (open truck), lunch and a guide. The group is limited to ten. Any interest call Nan at 422-2023.

For more info see: www.littlestsimonsisland.com

APRIL FIELD TRIPS *by Kay Hodnett*

Our next two field trips are scheduled for April, to take advantage of Spring migration. The first is to Webb Wildlife Management Area on April 3rd, a Sunday (the only day of the week during April that Webb is closed to turkey hunters). Webb is a prime birding destination. On our April 2009 trip there we saw a tremendous variety and number of birds--including a rare Bachman's sparrow, and even a couple of ruddy ground doves.

Our leader will be local naturalist and bird photographer Marvin Bouknight, who led us on a very rewarding February outing to Donnelly (we saw close to sixty species--including dozens of avocets). Marvin is a working man who has to have some compensation for his services. His charge for the Webb trip is \$10 per person (with a minimum of fifteen participants), so bring this amount with you on April 3rd.

Those wishing to carpool will meet at Moss Creek Village, leaving there at 7:30 AM so as to meet at the entrance to Webb at 9 AM. The trip should last at least three hours but less than four, after which we can have a brown bag lunch at the picnic area. Restrooms should be left unlocked for us. It can be quite buggy in the swampy area there, so bring insect repellent. Driving directions are below. To sign up for the trip call Kay Hodnett at 342-7485 or email her at sallyportk@gmail.com

Our second trip will be on Friday, 22 April, to the Audubon Center at Beidler Forest and Four Hole Swamp. Details on this trip will be in the next newsletter.

Directions to Webb

- Take 278 to Interstate 95
- Take 95 South to Exit 5
- Take US 17 North. Go almost a mile.
- Turn Left onto Hwy 321. Head North to Garnett (about 27 miles)
- In Garnett turn left in front of Post Office
- Continue straight, crossing over Hwy 119 onto SR 20 (Augusta Stagecoach Road)
- Cross over railroad tracks
- Go 2.6 miles to Webb entrance on Left
- We will meet along the oak-shaded road that leads to the office. Just pull over along the road rather than going to the office.
- Address is 1282 Webb Avenue, Garnett SC 29922

NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Joan Shulman

Thank you to Rick and Pam Riebesell for monitoring the trails in February and to Mary Jane and Bob Major for monitoring the trails in March. Rick and Pam are new members of Audubon here, and we are grateful for their interest in Newhall.

There will be a Work Day in the Preserve on Saturday, March 12, from 9:00 until noon or so. Remember to bring gloves, clippers, rakes, pruning saws, etc. Insect repellent might be a good idea, too. We value your help, even if you can't stay for the whole time. Call Marianne and Jim Currie (681-8525) if you have questions.

In April, we will conduct three guided walks in the Preserve--on the 6th, 13th, and 20th. All start at 10:00 A.M. in the parking lot. The fee per adult is \$7.00. Betty Treen, Mary Alice Walker, and Joan Shulman will be the leaders. We will also conduct a walk for a local garden club in mid-April.

As I have written many times before, the Newhall Preserve Committee seeks new members. Aren't there "a few good members" in our organization who will help us assure the good and responsible management of the Preserve in the future? Call me (842-9246) to get more details.

Hi Birding Friends! from Jack C.

Two dozen Auduboners had a very productive bird walk at Fish Haul Creek and Mitchelville Beach Parks on 2/18 on a beautiful springlike day, finding 46 bird species.

Highlights of the day were:

- An adult Bald Eagle soaring above us and spooking the shorebirds at times
- 2000+ Semipalmated Plovers mixed with 1000+ Dunlins
(Never seen that many Semis there before)
- Endangered Piping Plovers (2)
- Red-breasted Merganser (1)
- Black Skimmer (3 - first this winter)

Other birds seen/heard and for IBA tallying estimates were:

Marbled Godwit 2	Ring-billed Gull 60
Hooded Merganser 8	Forster's Tern 12
Black-bellied Plover 2	Northern Flicker 1
Short-billed Dowitcher 2	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 1
Sanderling 2	Downy Woodpecker 1.
Great Egret 3	Red-bellied Woodpecker 1
Great Blue Heron 1	American Crow 1
Snowy Egret 10	Blue Jay 1
Little Blue Heron 2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1
Tricolored Heron 1	Northern Mockingbird 1
White Ibis 2	Carolina Chickadee 1
Double-crested Cormorant 10	Tufted Titmouse 3
Clapper Rail (two flocks heard)	Palm Warbler 1
Brown Pelican 12	Pine Warbler 1
Red-shouldered Hawk 1	Yellow-rumped Warbler 6
Black Vulture 3	Savannah Sparrow 3
Turkey Vulture 1	White-throated Sparrow 1
Short-billed Dowitcher 6	Red-winged Blackbird 8 (All females)
Willet 8	Rusty Blackbird 10
Laughing Gull 40	Swamp Sparrow 1 *
	Black & White Warbler 1 *
	* Late additions

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

We've had an excellent month of birding in our HHI area despite a cold winter. However, there are hints of spring with the weather warming and several sightings of early Painted Buntings.

An accidental sighting of two Western Grebes were experienced at Fish Haul Creek by visitor Bev Schneider from Nova Scotia. Its long neck and very white breast and chin in winter plumage assured us that's what she sighted. This species is usually seen only in the western United States.

Rare birds found this month included: Eared Grebe and Grasshopper and White-crowned Sparrows at the Savannah Spoils Site, Red-breasted Nuthatch in Hilton Head Plantation, Virginia Rail at Fish Haul Creek Park, Purple Sandpiper at Tybee Island and Barn Owl at Savannah NWR.

Two out-of-season nightjars, the Whip-poor-will and Chucks-wills-widow were found in Savannah.

Many uncommon birds sighting included: American Bittern, Stilt Sandpiper, American Avocet, Sedge Wren, American Pipit, Orange-crowned Warbler, early Northern Waterthrush, Vesper, Nelson's and Seaside Sparrows, Long-billed Dowitcher, Canvasback, Ruddy Duck, Redhead, Red-throated Loon, Greater Scaup, Purple Finch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Common Goldeneye, Baltimore Oriole, Wilson's Plover, Loggerhead Shrike, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Piping Plover, Least Tern, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Pine Siskin and Great Black-backed Gull.

Other good birds reported were: Thousands of Tree Swallows and Dunlins, hundreds of American Robins, winter Hummer, Black Scoter, Sora, several Bald Eagles, Wilson's Snipe, Red Knot, Common Loon, Black & White Warbler and Eastern Meadowlark.

Thanks to all reporting their sightings: Fran Baer, Kay Hodnett, Barry Lowes, Annette Hausman, Susan Thomas, Dottie Bass, Miriam Waterhouse, Rita/Joe Kernan, Dorothy Mosior, Wendy Hansen, Mary Jane Majors, Peter Zachmann, Diane Churchill, Bev Schneider, Steve Calver and a number of visitors.

We continue to tally 1000-4000 shorebirds sighted at Fish Haul Creek/Mitchelville Beach towards an effort to make this area an Important Bird Area in South Carolina that we feel it deserves.

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

FROM THE FEBRUARY NATIONAL AUDUBON ADVISORY *by Sherm Barker*

Gulf restoration and recovery continues to be a top priority for Audubon. There is good news. Over the past several weeks Congress and the Administration have been revisiting the BP oil spill. The president's Oil Spill Commission released its report findings. Its most important recommendation: to designate 80% of the Clean Water Act Penalties that BP will have to pay be used to restore the Gulf Region. Two bills were also introduced in the House of Representatives and one is forth coming in the Senate that include significant new funding for Gulf Restoration.

On a less positive note, Congressman Fred Upton (R-MI) started his attack on the Clean Air Act by introducing legislation that would lead to a sweeping rollback of the EPA's authority to regulate power plant pollution and protect public health, Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK) introduced companion legislation joining two other bills designed to curb the authority of the EPA to provide protection from the ill effects of mercury, carbon dioxide, sulfur and nitrogen oxide and ground level ozone.

The US Fish and Wildlife Services in February announced its draft guidelines for wind power development. These guidelines seek to minimize the impact of wind farms on wildlife and habitats. The guidelines set forth a science based framework for balancing energy development with wild life protection. Audubon has long been concerned with the impact of land based wind farms on and believes there are a number of steps that can be taken to protect birds in particular. The guidelines can be read at www.fws.gov/windenergy

Did you know that the Common Loon has some of the highest mercury levels of any animal in the world? Mercury pollution comes from coal-fired power plants and is one of the pollutants EPA is working to reduce.

Well Deserved Kudos

By Clem Dietze

To our former President **Nan Lloyd** for an incredible year of work on behalf of our chapter.

Though she had some guidance from a few members, Nan virtually single handedly produced our new Field Guide. It is honestly one of the best local guides I have ever seen and countless hours were spent by Nan in compiling the guide and with help from Barry Lowes the accompanying Check List.

After many years of doing it Barry handed over co-ordination of the Christmas Bird Count to Nan. I doubt that many of us realize the tremendous amount of time involved in this from coordinating Team Captains and birders, to collecting the contributions, and finalizing and recording the results. We are indeed greatly indebted to Nan for her efforts.

From all of us a collective **THANK YOU NAN!**

In his State of the Union Address President Obama made a point to talk about the US moving to a clean energy economy in the years ahead using new clean energy friendly technology. He alluded to "common sense safe guards that make our air safe to breathe." As birders this sounds like good news. However, he missed a chance to plug specifically the work of the Clean Air Act which for 40 years has protected us from the worst polluters and more recently has been instrumental supporting efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change. We need to be alert in the months ahead and be prepared to contact our legislative representatives if efforts to weaken legislation like the Clean Air Act and agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency begin to emerge from Congress.

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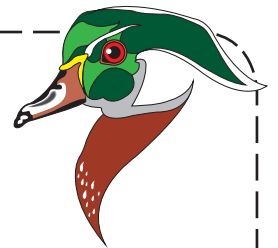
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BIRD SEED FUND-RAISER SUCCESSFUL

by Ed Nash

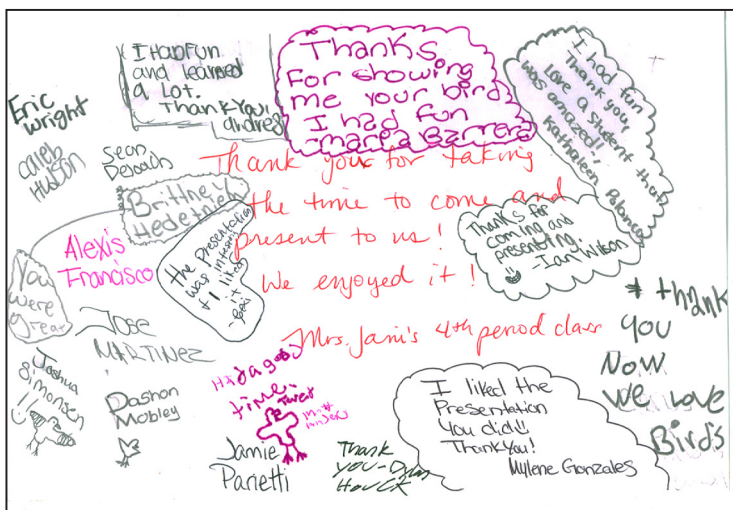
Our annual primary fund-raiser produced over \$1300 income for our chapter, thanks to the continued sponsorship by Wild Birds Unlimited. This was achieved with an exciting "Audubon Day" advertised promotion by Virginia Culter on January 15, which combined the seed sale and the local membership drive by Thea Luba. All of these funds go directly to support our chapter.

The seed sales totaled over 300 bags weighing over 4300 pounds. Over 60 members and friends purchased a large variety of seeds to match their needs. Additionally, generous cash donations were also received and are included in the above totals.

We wish to extend our thanks again to these supporters:

Fran Baer; Sherman Barker; Teresa Bedo; Dianna Bennett; Pat Boyle; Jill Bradley; Virginia Brennen; Helen Cartmill; Carol & Bob Clemens; Lois Clauer; Marianne Curry; Wanda David; Nancy Dinkel; A. Faccioli; John Faucett; Pam Finnie; H. Haisch; Annette Hausman; T. Hefty; Susan Glenn; Nancy Hayes; Kay Hodnett; Betty Inman; Don & Kathy Jackson; Shirley Johnson; Roger Johnson; Eileen Joyce; J. Kellin; Felice LaMarca; John LaBelle; Wanda Leopold; Ellie Linscott; M. Lippmann; Barry Lowes; Thea Luba; R. Many; Paul McMillan; Kelly Murphy; Bill Nicol; Gail O'Kane; Eleanor O'Key; Paul Padula; Betsy Pehrson; Cathy Reger; Mary Rosenstein; Sue Salmons; Allyn Schneider; Howard Shoemaker; Roger Terry; Ray Thimineur; Martha Worthy; Jerry Voight; Miriam Waterhouse; Page Weidman; Julie Yutzey.

WE THANK YOU, THE BIRDS THANK YOU, AND KIDS FROM SOUTH BEACH TO WHALE BRANCH THANK YOU!



Thank you note from class


DID YOU KNOW?

Your VP Clem Dietze is a Travel Consultant with 44 years experience in the industry. I have been a tour escort, cruise ship shore excursion manager, Travel Counselor and Agency owner. I have lost count of the mileage I have logged, the countries visited in depth, ships sailed on, tours organized, and independent itineraries arranged over the years. Here are just a few benefits you gain by contacting me.

- 1) I offer Personal, Professional, Knowledgeable, and unbiased advice.
- 2) I have sailed on or visited virtually all of the major cruise ships from deluxe to small ship exploration vessels which go where the big girls can't.
- 3) Our prices are as good as anything on the net and sometimes better due to our affiliation with the prestigious Virtuoso consortium.
- 4) I know the hotels both large and boutique throughout the world.
- 5) I can set up a personally escorted tour for Audubon members.
- 6) One of my specialties is Eco-touring, and I know the operators who do it right.
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CLEM DIETZE - Senior Consultant
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Hilton Head/Bluffton Audubon Society was founded in 1974.
We have 600 individual and family memberships.
100% of Membership dues to local chapter will support our local programs.

Benefits of Membership to our Local Chapter:

Monthly Programs & Field Trips
Citizen Science, eg. Christmas Bird Count/ Piping Plover Count
Newhall Preserve
Birding 101
Nature Photography
Education Outreach: Audubon Adventures
Discounts to local shops

For all membership information, contact Thea Luba at (843) 785-3214 or
thealuba@roadrunner.com.

Hilton Head/Bluffton Audubon Society Chapter

Local Membership Form 1 YR. - \$15 - Individual
 1 YR. - \$25 - Family
 1 YR. - \$10 - Student/Senior

Please enroll me as a member of Hilton Head/Bluffton Audubon Society.

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MARCH ~ APRIL 2011 Calendar

MARCH

- Thurs. Mar. 3 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Thurs. Mar. 10 **Monthly Meeting** 3:00 pm
at Honey Horn in the Sea Island Room
- Sat. Mar. 12 **One Year Anniversary**..... All Day
of Savannah Visitor Center
- Sat. Mar. 12 **Newhall Work Day**..... 9:00 am - Noon

APRIL

- Sun. Apr. 3 **Field Trip** to Webb Wildlife Refuge 7:30 am
- Weds. Apr. 6 **Newhall Walk**..... 10:00 am
- Thurs. Apr. 7 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Weds. Apr. 13 **Newhall Walk**..... 10:00 am
- Thurs. Apr. 14 **Monthly Meeting** 3:00 pm
at Honey Horn in the Sea Island Room
- Weds. Apr. 20 **Newhall Walk**..... 10:00 am
- Fri. Apr. 22 **Field Trip** to Beidler Forest 8:30 am

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, at the Sea Island Room at Honey Horn. 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.