

September 2011
No. 320

ECOBON

Newsletter of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society
Audubon Refuge Keepers



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by *Natalie Hefter*

I am pleased to be serving as the President for the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society this year. Since joining the Board of Directors in the spring, I've enjoyed getting to know the Board members and hearing about all of the wonderful work that the organization has been doing. This organization is fortunate to have such an experienced group of dedicated leaders - and I'm honored to be serving with them.

I look forward to getting to know many more of the HHIAS members at the regular meetings throughout the year. In the meantime, let me introduce myself to those of you whom I've not met yet. Currently, I am the Vice President of Programs at the Coastal Discovery Museum and I've worked at the organization since 1997. My husband, Chris, and I live in Bluffton and have both been in the Lowcountry since the late 1980s. My educational background is in art history and historic preservation, but my work at the Museum has taught me a great deal about the lowcountry's environment and natural history. I'm fairly new to birding, but I'm looking forward to learning from all of the experts that the HHI Audubon Society's membership holds.

Your Audubon chapter's education team has worked very hard the years to share their love of birding with students. With only a few volunteers willing to go into the schools to share their knowledge, we're not able to offer as many programs as we'd like to our younger residents. I hope that this year we are able to expand our corps of educators and to see how we can cooperate with other organizations to reach more youngsters and their families about birding, conservation and habitat protection.

We have a few new board members this year and each of us will do our best to bring our expertise to the organization. Thank you to those who 'heeded the call' last spring. There's always room for new ideas and new volunteers on our committees.

(continued on page 2)

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM *by Natalie Hefter*

Thursday, September 15, 2011

3:00 p.m. at Honey Horn in Sea Island Room

Ron Roth

Ron Roth is the former director and CEO of the Reading Public Museum in Reading, Pennsylvania, and director of the Nebraska Museum of Art of the University of Nebraska. He has curated or co-curated numerous exhibitions from the Patriotic Paintings of N.C. Wyeth to a major exhibition with international glass artist Dale Chihuly. More recently as an independent curator and consultant he researched and wrote the script for the permanent exhibition area of the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum in Reading, Pennsylvania and its exhibit on the Underground Railroad in central Pennsylvania. Currently he is preparing an exhibition for the Historic Beaufort Foundation in Beaufort, South Carolina on the history of the Beaufort Volunteer Artillery, one of the United States' first organized, military units.

Roth curated the exhibition John James Audubon in the Mid-Atlantic for the Reading Public Museum in Reading, Pennsylvania and organized and exhibition of the work of Audubon for the Museum of Nebraska Art of the University of Nebraska in Kearney, Nebraska. Roth researched and purchased major original works of Audubon for the creation of a gallery devoted to Audubon's art for the Museum of Nebraska Art.

As an educator he has made many presentations for diverse audiences including high schools, universities, service clubs, Elderhostel and most recently the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of the University of South Carolina, Beaufort.

He wrote and narrated a popular statewide weekly radio program on the arts for Nebraska Public Radio, and has been a seasonal historian and licensed battlefield guide for the Gettysburg National Military Park. His publications include non-fiction, fiction, poetry, museum catalogues and educational publications. He received his Bachelor's of Arts degree in history from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio and a Masters-at-Teaching degree in Museum Studies from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Roth recently moved to Bluffton, South Carolina with his wife Pat. He has two daughters and three grandchildren. He is the Vice President of the Lowcountry Civil War Roundtable and a member of the Advisory Council of the Greater Bluffton Community Endowment.

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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.

FIELD TRIPS *by Kay Hodnett*

Harbor Island Trip

On Friday, 30 September, we will travel to Harbor Island, about 50 miles north of Hilton Head, where we expect to see large flocks of migrating shorebirds. Our guide will be John Albert, a master naturalist and bird photographer who lives on Harbor Island.

Those wanting to carpool will meet at Moss Creek Village; we will leave there at 7 AM. John will call in gate passes for those who sign up for the trip, and at 8:30 AM we will all meet at the Harbor Island Beach and Racquet Club (which has restrooms). Our tour will last about two hours, most of which will be spent on the beach. Scopes should be especially useful.

When we leave Harbor Island, some of us may choose to spend some additional time looking around nearby Hunting Island, another good birding venue, after which we may repair to one of several local restaurants for lunch prior to returning to Hilton Head.

John Albert has not asked for payment, but it would be desirable for each person to bring \$5 to the outing so we can thank John with a monetary gift. To sign up for the trip call Kay Hodnett at 843-338-1445 or email her at sallyportk@gmail.com. Directions to Harbor Island follow below. If you use GPS enter 1 North Harbor Drive, St. Helena Island, SC 29920. This is the address across the street from the Racquet Club where we will rendezvous.

Directions to Harbor Island meeting place

Take US 278 to SC 170.

Take SC 170 North.

After 14.6 miles turn right onto SC 802 (Savannah Hwy).

After 2.1 miles turn right onto Parris Island Gateway, and continue to follow SC 802.

After 3.7 miles turn Right onto Ladys Island Drive (US 21/SC 802).

After 2.9 miles turn Right onto Us 21.

After 13.1 miles turn Left onto Harbor Drive North.

Go a little under a mile to the Beach and Racquet Club.

October Field Trip information on page 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *(continued from page 1)*

I ask each of you to think about how you could best help your Audubon chapter at this time. Maybe it's outreach at a festival - or putting up a birdbox at a school - or maybe you'd like to help put together a neighborhood bird walk for your plantation. Let's all work together to make this a great year for the Chapter - and something that we can grow on next year.

Thank you to Clem Dietze, Bill Nicol, Marianne Currie, Fran Baer and Thea Luba for helping me to get 'my feet wet' this spring. I do appreciate all of your assistance. And, welcome to the new and returning Board members. I'm looking forward to working together.

Our first meeting in September will be on Thursday, the 15th. I hope you'll plan to join us for the beginning of a great year for the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society.

NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Jack Greenshields

This is my first attempt at a status update on the Newhall Preserve after taking the handoff from Joan Shulman who has very ably handled this task previously.

Thanks to the trail monitors who have been watching and maintaining the Preserve. I performed this duty in May, Sandy Hunter in June, Angela and Jere Estes in July, and Bill and Robin Jordan in August. Marty and Robert Hocutt monitor in September and Ron Howenstine will handle October. Some of the new trail monitors came forward via a request for volunteers to members of the Low Country Master Naturalist Association. Marianne and Jim Currie continue to pitch in with various maintenance needs.

October will be a busy month at the Newhall Preserve with hopefully four guided walks for the public. We will also organize at least one Saturday work party.

It has been a dry summer and aerial views of Newhall reveal a significant amount of plant fuel which would burn should a fire erupt. A fire at Newhall could endanger approximately fifty homes in Sea Pines which ring the Preserve property. Over the last several years, Sea Pines has created fuel breaks around the trails in their Forest Preserve to reduce fire danger and improve wildlife habitat. A fuel break is a strip of land approximately 50 feet wide where underbrush, invasive species, dead wood, and vines are removed. Trees larger than a 5 inch diameter and selected specimen plants are not removed. Sea Pines would like to create a fuel break around the Newhall Preserve to protect the surrounding homes. They would manage the project by obtaining the various approvals and paying for the contracted work. They also would defend Hilton Head Audubon regarding any legal actions by any party regarding this project. The McNair Law firm is drafting an agreement for our Board's review. The proposed project would be completed during the upcoming winter.

Communication, questions, offers to volunteer, or just comments regarding the Newhall Preserve can be sent to me at jack4663shiel@comcast.net or 651-491-1851.

BIRD OF THE MONTH - WHITE IBIS

by Clem Dietze



The white ibis has been steadily increasing its range northward and there are literally multi thousand birds on and around Hilton Head and the rest of the coastal plain. The birds have become our most numerous summer residents.

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Our very hot and dry summer has about ended and we are seeing signs of a good fall birding season. Some early fall migrants and arriving shorebirds have already shown up.

Recently reported warblers were: Migrant Louisiana and Northern Waterthrushes, American Redstart and Black-throated Blue Warbler as well as other warblers ... Prairie, Yellow, Black & White, Pine and Prothonotary Warblers and Northern Parula and Common Yellowthroat. Other early migrants include Pectoral and Spotted Sandpipers, Whimbrel and Black-bellied Whistling Duck. Early arriving shorebirds include: Endangered Piping, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, uncommon Great Black-backed Gull, Marbled God-



wit, Red Knot, Ruddy Turnstone, Dowitcher, Sanderling and both Yellowlegs.

Rare bird highlights reported during the period were: Lark Sparrow at the recently reopened Savannah NWR, Roseate Spoonbill on Pinckney Island NWR, Bachman's Sparrow at Webb WMA, Solitary Sandpiper in Palmetto Dunes, Black Tern on Tybee Island and Gray Kingbird in Savannah, Ga.

Many uncommon species were reported during the summer and late spring (No Ecobon issued since May) and included: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Rose-breasted and Blue Grosbeaks, Reddish Egret, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites, White-breasted Nuthatch, Wild Turkey, Caspian and Least Terns, White Pelican, Glossy Ibis, Eurasian-collared Dove, Indigo Bunting, Purple Gallinule, Least Bittern and Canada Goose.

Other good birds reported were: Bobolink, Orchard Oriole, Painted Bunting, Arcadian Flycatcher, Bald Eagle (several), Red-headed Woodpecker, Gull-billed Tern, American Oystercatcher, Black Skimmer and many Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

Many thanks to our contributors for reporting their sightings: Fran/Denny Baer, Kay Hodnett, Nan Lloyd, Wendy Hansen, Annette Hausman, Diana Churchill, Carol Clemens, Dottie Bass, Miriam Waterhouse, Diane Faucette, Richard Shulman and a number of visitors.

To report a sighting for a rare, uncommon, first-of-the-year or -season or out-of-season bird, e-mail: BirdingFriends@yahoo.com or call 715-0540. Please state your name, the bird sighted, date and location of your sighting and any appropriate comments about the sighting.

Please all join in and report your good bird sightings!

How Are You Doing on Your List?

This summer, while the birds were busy nesting, I read two books on "Life Lists". I am a "lister" and found them to read like real adventure stories (as chasing any life bird is).

The first "Life List" by Olivia Gentile is the biography of Phoebe Snetsinger, who became the first person to see 8,000 life birds. In 40+ years I'm not yet to 800. The second was "To See Every Bird on Earth" by Dan Koeppel, a biography of his father who was a contemporary and on the same quest.

It is incredible how extensively these people and other named listers traveled and the hardships they endured. All also had seemingly complex personalities. Interesting???

It was fun to read about the origins of various birding societies and our worldwide tour agencies. The "sport" birding as we know it is not very old. You will recognize names.

BN Online and ABA Sales have both books.

In contrast to all of the gridlock and finger pointing emanating from Washington these days, here are two examples of bipartisan Congressional action gleaned from the Audubon news wire that should benefit our feathered friends.

In late July a bipartisan coalition of 9 Gulf Coast senators introduced the RESTORE the Gulf Coast Act of 2011, which would dedicate 80% of Clean Water Act penalties paid by BP and other parties responsible for the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster to Gulf Coast restoration. Audubon has played a key role in the partnership that has helped craft this agreement, and our chapters and activists have provided critical support to make this agreement possible wrote Audubon Pres. David Yarnold.

By a vote of 224-202 members of Congress from both parties recently rejected a misguided attempt to weaken the Endangered Species Act (ESA).. The bipartisan vote drew a clear line in the sand so that pushing species to extinction will not become the new law of the land. This failed attempt to gut the ESA would have paralyzed our nation's ability to protect hundreds of imperiled species . The bill would have prevented the US Fish and Wildlife Service from spending any money to implement some of the most crucial sections of the ESA thereby jeopardizing our natural heritage for future generations.

A big thanks to everyone who responded to Audubons alert messages and e-mails. In case you sometimes wonder if your letters, phone calls and e-mails ever do any good, in these two cases they did, and our endangered birds and animals thank you for your efforts.

With Deepest Sympathy

Hilton Head Island Audubon
extends our condolences
to Mary Jane Majors & family
on the sudden passing of her husband Bob.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER

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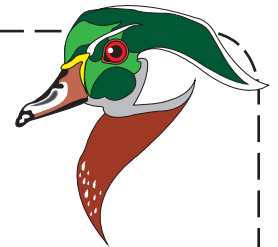
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OCTOBER FIELD TRIP *by Kay Hodnett*

Orangeburg Super Sod Farm trip

On Monday, 3 October, we will visit Orangeburg Super Sod Farm, about an hour and a half from Hilton Head. This is the best place in South Carolina during the Fall to find Golden Plovers and Upland, Pectoral, and Buff-Breasted Sandpipers. Horned Larks and Loggerhead Shrikes are usually seen as well, and Eurasian Collared-Doves are possible, along with various rarities. The birds are often far out in the fields, so scopes will be very helpful.

Our guide for the trip is Marvin Bouknight, who has led us on other very successful outings. Marvin is a professional naturalist who must make a living; the charge for this trip is \$10 per person. To sign up for the trip send a check for \$10 to Kay Hodnett at 4 Sally Port Road, Hilton Head 29928, or pay Kay at the September 15 Audubon meeting. Checks should be made out to Kay Hodnett.

Those wishing to carpool will meet at Moss Creek Village. We will depart Moss Creek at 7 AM. After the drive, carpoolers and all others will gather in the parking lot of the Exxon Station at the intersection of Interstate 26 and Highway 301 (Five Chop Road). There is also a Waffle House at this intersection, and several establishments have restrooms. See directions below. We will go to the sod farm together from the Exxon Station. The sod farm office address is 3086 Five Chop Road, Orangeburg SC 29115. But this is a commercial operation on private property, so except for special circumstances we should not go into the office and should be careful to park cars in a way that does not interfere with farming operations.

After spending a couple of hours at the sod farm, some may opt to have lunch in Orangeburg before returning to Hilton Head. Information about restaurants will be provided the day of the trip.

Directions to Exxon Station near Orangeburg Sod Farm

Take US 278 to Interstate 95.

Take 95 North toward Florence.

After 78 miles take Interstate 26 West toward Columbia.

After almost 15 miles take Exit 154 A onto US 301

(Five Chop Road).

Exxon Station is at this intersection.



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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.
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CLEM DIETZE- Senior Consultant
681-3033



BOOK REVIEWS *by Clem Dietze*

I have just finished two fantastic (I do not use the word loosely) books by Carl Safina published by Henry Holt & Co. They are MUST READING for every conservationist and anyone concerned about the future of this planet.

The books have received rave reviews coast to coast from The NY Times to National Geographic and on to the big west coast papers.

The Times reviewer refers to Safina's graceful and engaging prose. He is sometimes joyful often sardonic and always refreshing. The science in the books is briskly written in layman's terms and not dry analysis.

Some reviewers have called him the greatest author on humanities relationship with the entire biosphere since Rachael Carson. Another has compared him to Aldo Leopold and one says The View from Lazy Point is the 21st century equivalent of Thoreau's Walden Pond.

These are not breeze through books. You will find yourself stopping every few paragraphs to digest and meditate on what you have just read.

Personally, I consider the two books perhaps the most engrossing non-fiction I have ever read aside from The Bible.

If you have a Kindle or a Nook the books are inexpensive and great to have for reading at lunch or waiting for the Doctor.

Please do yourself a major favor and read them.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND/ BLUFFTON
AUDUBON SOCIETY

www.hiltonheadaudubon.org



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.

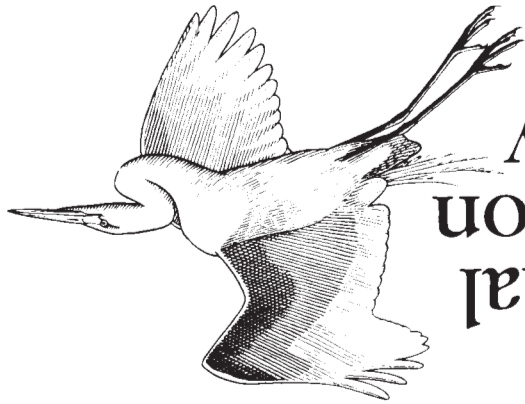
Hilton Head/Bluffton Audubon Society Chapter

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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Family Members _____
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City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Ph./Cell _____ Email: _____

Mail Check to: **Hilton Head/Bluffton Audubon Society** • P.O. Box 6185 • Hilton Head Island, SC 29938



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SEPTEMBER and OCTOBER 2100 Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- Thurs. Sept. 8 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Thurs. Sept. 15 **Monthly Meeting** 3:00 pm
at Honey Horn in the Sea Island Room

OCTOBER

- Tues. Oct. 4 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Thurs. Oct. 13 **Monthly Meeting** 3:00 pm
at Honey Horn in the Sea Island Room

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 N-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.