

October 2012
No. 330

ECOBON



Newsletter of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society
Audubon Refuge Keepers

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Natalie Hefter

I hope that all of our members had a pleasant summer. It was nice to see everyone back from our summer hiatus for the September meeting. We had a fabulous presentation by Robert Rommel about location and timing of birding. He shared some of his advice and tips for being in the right place for great birding. If any of you read his comments on the 'Birding Friends' yahoo group, you know that Robert's a real expert – who always does seem to be in the right place for great sightings. Thank you, Robert.

We have been invited to attend a special event / field trip by the Open Land Trust of Beaufort County. On Friday, October 12th, our area Society (along with Fripp Island and Sun City) can join Dr. Chris Marsh for a walk around Wigeon Point, a lecture and a potluck dinner. Dr. Marsh will address 'The State of the Birds: Globally, Nationally, and Locally.' If you would like to attend, an RSVP is required, as space is limited – call 843-521-2175 or email info@openlandtrust.com. This property is known for its great birding – and is only open to the public by appointment. Hope you can join us.

It's never too early to begin planning for the Christmas Bird Count and our annual Bird Seed Sale. We'd like to find our way into many of the local plantation newsletters and / or e-blasts. If you are involved in your neighborhood's communications or newsletters, can you help? Please let me know if you might be able to help get an article or an announcement into your bulletin.

Thank you to all of you who are members of our local Audubon Society and to those who are also members of National Audubon. Over 100 individuals/families directly support our local chapter by being 'local members.' This donation helps the HHI Audubon pay for the education programs we offer to the schools, supports the Newhall Preserve, and allows the Society to help with other projects related to our mission. If you've not been a 'local member' in the past, I'd encourage you to consider a donation this year. Look for more information soon.

OCTOBER PROGRAM by Rick Riebesell

Thursday, October 11, 2012 -

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



"Low-Country Species – Now and Gone"

Carlos Chacon will be presenting "Low-Country Species – Now and Gone" at the October 11 meeting of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society at Honey Horn in the Sea Island Room at 3:00 pm. The meeting is open to the public and is without charge.

Carlos Chacon was born and raised in Costa Rica. Since he was 12 years old, he has volunteered for various nature-related organizations. His fascination with nature led him to study Tropical Biology at the University of Costa Rica. After graduating in 1996, Carlos began working as a nature guide, since then, he has been leading nature trips, from bird watching and butterfly watching to whale watching along both coasts of Central America. Through his work in Central America, Carlos has led tours for the World Wildlife Fund, Linblad Expeditions, Mountain Sobek Travel, Tauck Tours, Thompson Family Adventures and several other international travel companies.

Since 2004 Carlos has been living with his wife and two children in Bluffton, South Carolina. Since moving to the Low Country, Carlos has worked as a kayak guide in the marshes of Hilton Head and an alligator tour guide in the Sea Pines Forest Preserve. Carlos joined the Coastal Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island in 2005, where he is the manager of natural history for the Coastal Discovery Museum. He also organizes a couple of nature trips to Costa Rica each year. In 2007, Carlos received a M.S. in Earth and Environmental Resources Management from the University of South Carolina. Carlos received his Masters in Earth and Environmental Resources Management from the University of South Carolina in 2007. Carlos is a passionate ultimate Frisbee player.

.....

OCTOBER FIELD TRIP, Friday October 12, 2012

Field trip by the Open Land Trust of Beaufort County. On Friday, October 12th, we can join Dr. Chris Marsh for a walk around Wigeon Point, a lecture and a potluck dinner. Dr. Marsh will address 'The State of the Birds: Globally, Nationally, and Locally.' To attend, an RSVP is required, as space is limited – call 843-521-2175 or email info@openlandtrust.com. This property is known for its great birding – and is only open to the public by appointment. Hope you can join us.

HHI Audubon

Board of Directors:

<i>President</i>	
Natalie Hefter	304-9789
<i>Vice President</i>	
Rick Riebesell	681-6424
<i>Treasurer</i>	
John Faucette	785-2899
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	
Marianne Currie	681-8525
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	
Clem Dietze	837-2612
<i>Members-at-Large</i>	
Howard Costa	842-9447
Jack Greenshields	715-0340
Nan Lloyd	363-2092
Barry Lowes	837-3537
Mary Jane Major	342-5804
Bill Nicol	671-4721
Carlos Chacon	689-6767
Joan Wilson	837-2874

Committee Chairpersons:

<i>Adopt-A-Refuge (Pinckney)</i>	
Clem Dietze	837-2612
<i>Audubon Newhall Preserve</i>	
Jack Greenshields	715-0340
<i>Bird Walks/Field Trips</i>	
OPEN	
<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>	
Shelia Johnson	295-5562
<i>Hospitality</i>	
OPEN	
<i>Legislation</i>	
Clem Dietze	837-2612
<i>Membership</i>	
Carol Clemens	689.2903
<i>Newsletter Circulation</i>	
Marianne Currie	681-8525
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	
Joan Wilson	837-2874
<i>Programs</i>	
Rick Riebesell	681-6424
<i>Publicity & Public Relations</i>	
Rick Riebesell	681-6424
<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



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.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT *by Charlotte White*

The 2012 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be on Friday, December 14, our great citizen scientists count of over 100 years! So put that date on your calendar now!

As you can read at the National Audubon Society site at <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>, "From feed watchers and field observers to count compilers and regional editors, everyone who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count does it for love of birds and the excitement of friendly competition --and with the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation." Go to the web site above to learn how data from the CBC helps birds.

There has been a big change this year in the Christmas Bird Count. After two years of discussion and budget modeling, National Audubon made two major changes for the CBC starting this year. First, the CBC is now a free program. Audubon will no longer charge the \$5 fee of field participants. Second, to minimize the effects of the loss of fee income, American Birds will no longer be printed on paper and mailed to participants, and Audubon will move to an online delivery of the summary results of the CBC.

If you do not know already how to contact the CBC captain for your area, call Charlotte White at (843) 540-3858 and she will tell you how you can participate. In the November Ecobon, we will give more information about participation in the CBC. In the meantime, enjoy the current migration of birds going on all around us at this time of the year. And remember to come to the great December program, when Barry Lowes gives us a review of the 100 most likely birds we will see when that day, December 14, arrives.



Photos courtesy of Fran Baer

HELP WANTED

We need presenters for the Great Backyard Bird Count program in local middle schools.

No experience required! We provide the Barry Lowes 30 bird photos on a CD and training. YOU BRING: the HUTZPAH--well, maybe just some confidence, your oratory ability, your Audubon level of bird knowledge, and the WIZARDS OF OZ TRAINERS will pump you up with useful tidbits.

Can you hear desperation?

Call Mary Jane Major, Education Chair at 342-584

NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Jack Greenshields

With the cooler weather the number of visitors to the Newhall Preserve gradually increases. They come to see some of the Fall flowering shrubs, migrating birds, and our alligators. Also with the cooler months we can start a more aggressive maintenance effort. Our next workday for Newhall will be Saturday morning, November 10. Of course, there are some who volunteer their time more often and individuals helping out on their own schedule are always appreciated.

Thanks to Bill Jordan for being our September trail monitor. Ron Howenstine has volunteered for October.

Five Master Naturalists responded to a posting on the Low Country Master Naturalist website asking for volunteers interested in leading guided walks in the Preserve highlighting the native plants and wildlife plus the unique history of Newhall. The first guided walk will be at 10am on October 25, followed by November 1, 8, and 15. The walks are free to the public but donations are encouraged and appreciated.

Anyone interested in assisting or learning more about the Newhall Preserve should contact Jack Greenshields at jackg308@gmail.com or call 651-491-1851.



~ Photo above courtesy of Fran Baer

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Our Fall warbler migration is off to a very good start and one of our earliest ever. The best is yet to come! Migrant and winter shorebirds are already showing up on our beaches.

Nineteen species of warblers have been sighted to date in our area including the rare Nashville, Bay-sided, Tennessee, Hooded and Worm-eating Warblers and the uncommon Magnolia, Yellow, Prairie Warblers and Louisiana and Northern Waterthrushes plus American Restart (many), Common Yellowthroat (many), and Black-throated Blue, Palm (early) and Prothonotary Warblers and others. Migrant warblers have been sighted every day at Crystal Lake in Indigo Run since 8/11 for a very early migration start and 16 of the above species have been found there.

Fall migrants reported so far other than warblers were: Rare Black and Common Terns, uncommon Yellow-throated Vireo and Semipalmated Sandpipers.

Other uncommon sightings reported included: Reddish Egret, Least Bittern, Mississippi Kite, Purple Gallinule, Piping Plover, Least Tern, Black-bellied Whistling Duck and an early White-breasted Nuthatch. Other good birds reported were: Painted Bunting, Red Knot, Eastern Wood Pewee, early Pied-billed Grebe, Black & White and Yellow-throated Warblers and Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

Thanks to all reporting their sightings: Barry Lowes, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Susan Taylor, Pam Riebesell, Bob White, Robert Rommel, Rich Matheny, Nan Lloyd, Joanne McMenamin, Annette Hausman, Rita Kernan, Dianne Faucette, Jim Grove and several visitors.

To report a bird sighting for a rare, out-of-season, uncommon, First-Of-The-Year, First-Of-The-Season species, e-mail: BirdingFriends@yahoo.com or call 843-432-2661 (Must dial the 843) or 290-9469. Please state your name, bird sighted, date/location of your sighting and other pertinent information.

Plan to go birding soon and enjoy our wonderful fall migration and the arrival of some of our winter birds. Please report your sightings for all to share and enjoy!



Wild Birds Unlimited

- Binoculars & Spotting Scopes
- Field Guides
- Nature Books
- Nature Gifts
- Custom Seed Blends
- Bird Feeders & Houses
- Bird Baths & Fountains
- Water Gardening Supplies

We Bring People And Nature Together®
Visit us at www.wbu.com

Festival Centre at Indigo Park
45 Pembroke Dr., Suite 130
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926
843-681-4461
wildbirds@hargray.com

Place your ad here!

Call Bill Nicol
for more information
671-4721

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Clean Water Act has an impressive record of making water safer to drink and more livable for wildlife. Now it's time for the landmark law to be used to tackle another growing crisis: plastic pollution in our oceans. Plastic litter on our beaches and in ocean waters is deadly for nearly 300 marine species, including sea turtles, whales, seals, fish, corals and seabirds. Hundreds of thousands of animals die each year from eating or getting tangled up in plastic.

The Center for Biological Diversity recently filed the first-ever petition to the Environmental Protection Agency to begin curbing plastic pollution in the ocean. Said the Center's Director Miyoka Sakashita in a new piece in the Huffington Post: "The more I learn about this crisis, the more one thing becomes clear: We've got to stop polluting these areas with derelict fishing gear, beverage bottles, caps, shopping bags and every other scrap of plastic that, while convenient for us, is a daily death sentence for sea life. Plastic simply does not belong in the ocean."

TRACKING SONGBIRDS' 10,000 km JOURNEY

Forget delaying a trip for bad weather. When it comes to overseas flights, migratory songbirds seem determined to leave as scheduled.

Songbirds eager to get to their North American breeding grounds depart Central America at the same time annually, almost to the exact date, according to a York University study.

By outfitting songbirds with dime-sized, 1.5 gram geolocator "backpacks", researchers were able to track the same songbirds' flight patterns, departure dates and arrival dates for two years in a row - the first time this has been done, biology professor Bridget Stutchbury said.

"Our study seems to suggest each bird has an internal clock and arrives on time," Stutchbury said from Pennsylvania. The songbirds left within three days of the same calendar date from one year to the next.

The songbirds' punctuality may be the envy of beleaguered air travellers, but it might also explain their severely declining numbers. The population of wood thrush, the species studied, has decreased by more than 50 per cent in Canada since the 1960s.

Along with the risks such as tall buildings in urban centers or deforested habitats, the songbirds may be at risk because they do not adjust their calendars for climate change, Stutchbury said.

If the songbirds cannot adapt their departure dated to changing weather over the years, they might not be able to take advantage of the optimum food supply. The food supply usually peaks in late May or early June, just when the birds' young are hatching.

Changes in climate could force songbirds to arrive earlier to ensure their offspring have enough food to survive. Despite the advantages of being an early bird, the songbirds seem reluctant to change their habits - individuals even return to the same destinations annually.

"They have an amazing on-board navigation system," Stutchbury said.

To get data on an individual bird, a researcher had to catch it, equip it with a geolocator (the birds didn't seem to notice the chip, which is strapped around their legs and sits like a fanny pack,) the re-catch it at the other end of its journey to collect the data.

So far, this has been done with only 10 birds - now that's a feat, considering their size and their 10,000 kilometre sound-trip journey from Nicaragua, Honduras and Belize to Canada and the Northeastern US.

Emily Jackson, Toronto Star July 2012

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER

MEMBERSHIP FORM 1 YR. - \$20

Please enroll me as a member of National Audubon. I'll receive a full year of membership benefits including the award-winning AUDUBON magazine.

Name _____

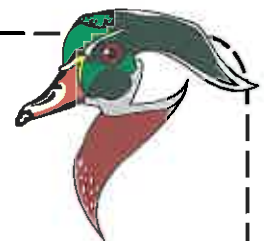
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email: _____

Mail a check payable to NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Mail to: National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 422246, Palm Coast, FL 32142-6714



U50
C9ZU500Z

FLICKER - How He Got His Name

The wings of flickers catch the eye like flickering light as they fly, and they hammer on trees like carpenters. Either of these characteristics could be the origin of their common name. The Old Icelandic 'flak' meant "hanging loosely," or fluttering." A flicker's call, usually rendered as "wick-a-wick," might also sound like "flicker-flick". "Flick or fleck", another possibility, meant "a light blow" and the colloquial name for the yellow-shafted flicker is yellow hammer, used by the Alabama legislature when it designated the flicker as its state bird.

Diana Wells, from "100 Birds and How They Got Their Names"

SAP-TAPPING

Do sapsuckers hurt the trees they love?



Yellow-bellied sapsuckers can be visitors to gardens and woods throughout much of North America at some point during the year. This means that many of our woody plants are fair game for the sapsucker's drilling. In fact, they are known to bore holes for sap in more than 275 species of deciduous and evergreen trees as well as in some shrubs and vines.

Sapsuckers drill for sap throughout the year. Their holes are formed into two characteristic designs: short, horizontal rows (the type drilled into maple) and a wafflelike pattern of squares or rectangles in vertical rows. This wafflelike effect is caused by the birds repeatedly pecking at holes that produce an especially sweet sap.

The amount of sugar in sap varies not only in different types of trees, but also within a single genus. For instance, the sugar content of the sugar maple is at least twice that of other maples.

Single-row holes are most often made during spring migration on plants that come into leaf or flower first, and in fall on plants that retain their leaves the longest. The same trees are often used year after year. Single-row holes seldom harm the plants, though scars may be visible for years.

Researchers have found that the sap of many injured or diseased trees is sweeter than that of healthy ones. This is because plants use accumulated sugars in an effort to fight infirmities and repair injuries. Therefore, when a sapsucker continually drills on a favorite plant, the drilling could be a sign of an underlying problem.

From Bird Watcher's Digest, by Kathy Piper

BEHAVIOR PATTERNS IN BIRDS

Behavior is really the way in which an animal acts and it can often be demonstrated that it has survival value; the way in which sparrows respond to a prowling cat has an immediate bearing upon their very existence. Although movement is an essential ingredient of most behavior, some behavior involves giving it up altogether. The Bittern freezes in a special posture when threatened with danger and, being well camouflaged, it seems to vanish into its reedy surroundings. Behavior operates in circumstances that vary from species to species (e.g. with the kind of habitat and predators).



The term 'behavior' covers such a wide range of activities that it is useful to recognize two categories of behavior. General locomotion (such as flying), feeding and preening are all examples of 'maintenance activities', so named because their effect is to keep the individual in good order while having relatively little influence on other birds. The other class of behavior is concerned with conveying information to, and influencing the moods and activities of, other birds of the same species. These kinds of behavior can be called 'displays'.

The evolution of language codes have enabled birds to be social. Of course, some are far more gregarious than others. For example, many birds of prey come together in pairs in order to breed but otherwise they lead fairly solitary lives. On the other hand, many seabirds such as Adelle Penguins form great bird 'cities' during the breeding season and, like our own



urban societies, there is a degree of orderliness about them. Discipline is achieved with rules, regulations and conventions that each bird must observe or else it will be attacked, ostracized and fail to breed.

Displays are often conspicuous, attractive to our eyes and carried out in a stereotyped manner; it is not altogether surprising that these have been the favorite study material of ethologists (scientists concerned with analyzing behavior).

Bird Behavior by John Sparks

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.

Name _____

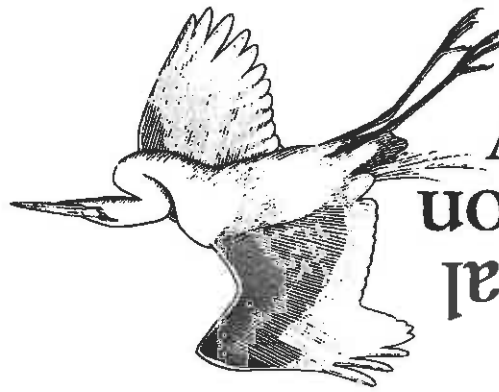
Family Members _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Ph./Cell _____ Email: _____

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



National Audubon Society

Issue #: 330
 Hilton Head, South Carolina 29938
 P.O. Box 6185
 Organization: Hilton Head Island Audubon Society
 Frequency: Monthly Sept.-May
 Issue Date: October 2012
 Title: Ecobon

ECOBON
 P.O. Box 6185
 Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938
 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Organization
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Hilton Head Island, SC
 Permit #39



OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2012 Calendar


OCTOBER

- Thurs. Oct. 4 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
 at the Armstrong Hack Conference Rm at Honey Horn
- Thurs. Oct. 11 **Monthly Meeting** 3:00 pm
 at Honey Horn
- Fri. Oct. 12 **Field Trip** All day
 by Chris Marsh on Wigeon Point

NOVEMBER

- Thurs. Nov. 1 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
 at the Jarvis Room, Old Coastal Discovery Museum
- Thurs. Nov. 8 **Monthly Meeting** 3:00 pm
 at Honey Horn
- Sat. Nov. 10 **Newhall Work Day** 8:00 am
 at Honey Horn

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!



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 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.