



Audubon

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By *Natalie Hefter*

Thank you very much for allowing me to serve as your President over the past two years. Where has the time gone? It seems like just a few months ago that I agreed to serve – and now my term is complete. It has been such a pleasure working with the Board, Committee Chairs and members over these past two years. I will be staying on as a board member and I'm looking forward to working on various projects with the committees.

I'm pleased to let you know that Rick Riebesell will serve as President next year and that Robert Rommel will serve as Vice President. Marianne Currie will continue as Secretary and John Faucette will continue as Treasurer. We are looking for an Assistant Treasurer to work with John this year in order to take over as Treasurer next year. If you are interested in helping, please contact John Faucette to discuss the position. Kathy and Grant Greider will be planning the programming at meetings and Carlos Chacon will coordinate with some volunteers to plan some field trips. Thanks to all who have agreed to serve.

Thank you to all of you who have helped with the club's various projects, activities and programs over the last two years. I've learned a great deal from all of you and enjoyed getting to know you. And, I'd even say that I've learned enough that I can call myself a 'birder' now!

MAY PROGRAM *by Rick Riebesell*

Monday, May 6, 2013, 5:00 p.m. at Dolphin Point in Hilton Head Plantation

Just a reminder.... Annual Picnic

The annual picnic of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society will be held Monday, May 6 at the Dolphin Head Recreation Facility in Hilton Head Plantation. Only current Hilton Head Audubon Society members may attend.

At 5:00 pm Carlos Chacon will be leading a guided walk to Pine Island. After the guided walk will be a presentation by the Dolphin Project.

Audubon will provide Fried Chicken, plates, silverware, napkins, soft drinks, and water. The fee for attending is \$10 per person, payable at the picnic, which includes a donation to the Dolphin Project.

Attendees are advised to bring insect repellent, camping chairs, flashlights, a side dish – for last names A - O bring a salad or vegetable plate and for last names P - Z bring a dessert, and if Fried Chicken is not a desired food, a main dish. You may bring adult beverages.

Space is limited and reservations are required. Reservations are by email at audubonhhirsvp@gmail.com. Please indicate in your email the names of all persons attending, whether a Hilton Head Plantation gate pass is needed, and confirm the side dish you are bringing.

The Hilton Head Plantation gate passes will be arranged approximately 48 hours before the picnic, so be sure to make your reservation early.



MAY FIELD TRIP *by Natalie Hefter* Thurs, May 23, 2013 at 8:00 am

Pinckney Island Field Trip with Joanne McMenamin

Meet in the parking lot under the trees. It will be an 1.5 hr hike.

Bring water, binoculars, cameras, walking shoes, comfortable wear for the weather conditions. The refuge has no restroom facilities or drinking fountains.

Hike along the marsh edge and through wooded areas to Ibis Pond at the Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge. We expect to wading birds nesting at the rookery, along with woodland birds and including, hopefully, Painted Buntings during the trip. Joanne McMenamin is an active Audubon member and has led kayak trips and walking tours of the Pinckney Island refuge for Water Dog Outfitters. In addition, she is a member of the Audubon Newhall Preserve committee and actively assists in trail maintenance and leading weekly informational walks through the site.

Please email Joanne to register: fourjm@yahoo.com



HHI Audubon

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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.

B Butterflies! F

Hello everyone, on behalf of the Coastal Discovery Museum and the Hilton Head Audubon Society, we will like to extend an invitation to a special butterfly watching field trip to the Tillman Sand Ridge Heritage Preserve.

<http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/sites/SC/tillman.html>



On Monday May 13th, local butterfly expert and enthusiast Dennis Forsythe and the Coastal Discovery Museum manager of Natural History Carlos Chacon will co-lead a field trip along the preserve to observe and learn about the native butterfly species. Due to the nature of this field trip, space is limited to 15 participants. Participants should bring water, sunscreen, appropriate clothing and hat, and binoculars.

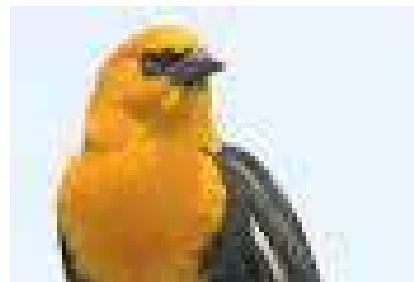


Participants will meet at 8:30 am at the Target Parking Lot in Bluffton in order to car-pool to the preserve. Please contact Carlos Chacon at cchacon@coastaldiscovery.org if you want to participate in this field trip. This invitation is extended to Coastal Discovery Museum volunteers that help with the Karen Wertheimer Butterfly Enclosure maintenance and tours as well as to members of the Audubon Society that help with the organization of field trips.



Thanks a lot for all you do for the Coastal Discovery Museum and the Hilton Head Audubon Society.

Carlos Chacon



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NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Jack Greenshields

Our Thursday morning 10am guided walks which have been very popular in March and April will continue through May. Joanne McMenamin, Kay Grinnell, Joan Shulman, Rita Kernan, Mary Alice Walker, and I have all led very well attended walks for visitors to the Preserve. Also, although these walks are free to the public, many participants make contributions at our donation post.

Visitors to the Preserve have been fascinated observing the nesting of a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers which have made a home in a dead tree not very far into the North Woods Trail entrance near the pond.

Thanks to Sherm Barker who was the Newhall Preserve trail monitor for April. Joan Shulman is performing this task for May.

The property survey of the Newhall boundaries with Sea Pines is anticipated to be completed in the near future. We are awaiting delivery of the special markers with the Audubon Newhall preserve identification label.

Thanks to Carlos Chacon and the Coastal Discovery Museum for providing some plants which are being installed around our pond deck. These are all host plants for native butterflies. A host plant is the tree or flower that a specific butterfly lays its eggs on. For instance, Monarch butterflies prefer to lay their eggs on milk weed plants. The Monarch caterpillar eats the leaves of the mildly toxic milk weed which in turn makes the caterpillar uneatable to other wildlife.

Osprey Watch

We need a pair of eyes in each of the communities below to monitor osprey nests once a month through August for 10-15 minutes.

**Sea Pines
Wexford
Long Cove Club
Port Royal Plantation
Shipyard
Windmill Harbour**

If you live in one of these communities and are interested in helping in a county-wide osprey monitoring project, please call or e-mail us and we'll give you the details. We've been involved in this study for the past four years—it's very rewarding and a lot of fun! Please contact us.

John and Dianne Faucette
johnfaucette@yahoo.com
785-2899

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

We are well into an active Spring season. Many of our migrant songbirds and shorebirds have arrived and others are expected soon. Our Spring migration is a little late this year and is still in progress.

Eighteen warbler species have been reported this Spring to date ... Eleven of those species have migrated into our area: Rare Blue-winged, Hooded, Swainson's and Worm-eating Warblers, uncommon Louisiana and Northern Waterthrushes, Prairie Warbler and Ovenbird and the American Redstart, Prothonotary Warber and Northern Parula. Other Spring migrants arriving in our area include: Rare Western Sandpiper, uncommon Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Swainson's Thrush and Pectoral Sandpiper and the American Robin.



Other rare sightings reported were: Bachman's Sparrow at Webb WMA, Glaucous Gull at Tybee Island and late Red-breasted Nuthatch on HHI.



Other uncommon species found included: Endangered Piping Plover, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Swallow-tailed Kite, American Kestrel, American Bittern, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grosbeak, White-breasted Nuthatch and Mottled Duck.



Other FOTY birds arriving this month included: Summer Tanager, Orchard Oriole, Eastern Kingbird, Chuck-will's-widow, Red-eyed Vireo, Barn and Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Orchard Oriole, Green Heron, Chimney Swift, Great-crested Flycatcher and Painted Bunting.

Other good finds of interest reported were: Bald Eagle in nest with Eaglet, Black & White and Yellow-throated Warblers, Sora, Common Yellowthroat, endangered Wood Stork, Red Knot and Bonoparte's Gull.

Thank to all birders reporting their sightings: Barry Lowes, Jane Hester, Dottie Bass, Miriam Waterhouse, Russ Wigh, Ally McNair, Jim Grove, Diana Churchill, Kathy/Grant Greider, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Susan Taylor, Annette Hausman, Wendy Hansen, Dick Phillips, Mary Ann Lueckel, Joanne McMenamin, Karen Marts, Dianne/John Faucette and several visitors.

To report a bird sighting that is Rare, Out-Of-Season (OOS), Uncommon, First-Of-The-Year (FOTY) or First-Of-The-Season (FOTS) e-mail: BirdingFriends@yahoogroups.com or call 290-9469. Please state your name, the bird sighted, date and location of your sighting and any other pertinent Information about your sighting.

Now is a wonderful time of year to bird in our great outdoors and find some migrants or summer arrivals before our Spring migration is over!

HHI Audubon's Nan Lloyd Contributes to a First North American Sighting.

An eight page paper published in the Vol.66 No.3 2013 issue of "North American Birds", the American Birding Association's Journal of Ornithological Records in North America, documents the first occurrence of a warbler from Central Asia. Research and collaboration with authorities on the genus indicate that the bird was a Chiffchaff of the easternmost subspecies called a **Siberian Chiffchaff**. Nan is acknowledged in the paper as one of four who obtained photographs. The sighting took place in a "boneyard" at Gamble, St Lawrence Island, Alaska on 6-7 June 2012.



Photo courtesy of N. Lloyd

St. Lawrence Island is believed to be part of the old "land bridge" between Siberia and the new world.



Photo courtesy of P. Lehman

Nan Lloyd has been a Board Member of Hilton Head Audubon Society of at least 20 years, president for two, field trip chairperson, website designer & recently revised the "Birders Guide to Hilton Head Island, SC and the Low Country". Her ABA Life List is 615 and growing!!

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TO SEE EVERY BIRD ON EARTH *by Dan Koeppel*

What drives a man to travel to sixty countries and spend a fortune to count birds? And what if that man is your father?

Richard Koeppel's obsession began at the age of twelve, when he spotted his first bird - the Brown Thrasher - in Queens, New York, and promptly jotted the sighting in a notebook. Several decades, one failed marriage, and two sons later, he added an astonishing 517 birds to that list on a single trip to Kenya. Soon after, he gave up on romantic relationships, scaled down his medical practice, and decided to see every bird on earth, becoming a "Big Lister", a member of a subculture of competitive bird-watchers worldwide, all pursuing the same goal. Over twenty-five years, he collected more than 7,000 species (of a known 9,600), becoming one of about ten people ever to do so.

"To See Every Bird on Earth" explores the thrill of this chase, the all-absorbing crusade at the expense of all else, and travel - to places both dangerous and dull - for the sake of making a check mark in a notebook. The story stretches from the manicured parks of urban America, to the fields and farmlands of Europe, and finally to the most remote corners of the Brazilian Amazon; it explores the powerful nature of the human relationship with birds, and how that relationship has helped define our very conception of what life is and how it evolved. It is also the story of obsession - showing how our need to list, name, catalogue, and capture the world around can be baffling, hilarious, and ultimately exalting.

The author, Dan Koeppel, is a well-known outdoors, nature and adventure writer who's been published in the New York Times Magazine, Outside, Audubon, Popular Science and in National Geographic Adventure, where he is a contributing editor. A former commentator for public radio's Marketplace, Koeppel has also appeared on CNN and Good Morning America.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER

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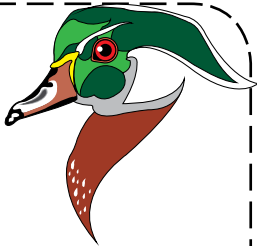
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Mail a check payable to **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**
 Mail to: National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 422246, Palm Coast, FL 32142-6714

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Dear Captains/Leaders of the 2012 Audubon Christmas Bird Count...

While we stand deep in the river of Migration rushing past us these days, it also reminds us of the challenge of Bird Count Day - not so far off.

This past count was excellent in the way that you Captains and other leaders organized your areas and turned up outstanding sightings and numbers. The Regional Director, who had been critical of our reporting in the past, wrote us a letter of thanks and commendation for the 2012 Christmas Bird Count.

As big as our upward step was for December 2012, there are some improvements in our protocol, which can be helped. Some will make your work easier and some are the usual things each year, like finding new or young recruits.

We are having a meeting for all of you captains and leaders on May 8 (Wednesday) at 2 pm at the Dunkin Donuts Shop, just west of Pineland Mall on the south side of highway 278. It is centrally located and also has a private meeting area which suits our need. This will be our only meeting before the usual October CBC Captains' meeting, so please make a special effort to attend. The meeting is half social/thanks and half to discuss the 2013 count.

You are the reason for why our CBC is growing ever more successful. We look forward to seeing you on May 8 at 2 pm.

Good birding! Barry Lowes and Charlotte White

What Migrating Sharpies Eat

The standard way to determine what a bird of prey eats is to examine what's left after its meals. The method works well during breeding season, but it's of no use after the birds move on.



What do raptors eat while migrating? Biologists who captured 72 Sharp-shinned Hawks at a hawk watch in the Manzano Mountains inn New Mexico recently took a novel approach to answering that question.

They checked the hawks' beaks and talons for prey species' feathers, which the scientists gathered. Then, back in the lab, they extracted nucleotide sequences from the feathers and compared them to genes obtained from reference feathers taken from 57 bird species netted at banding sites located not far from the hawk watch.

The results showed that migrating Sharpies take most of their prey in proportion to its abundance. Twenty species were identified conclusively, including three species never before described as Sharp-shinned Hawk prey: Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Bullock's Oriole, and Townsend's Warbler.

The most common prey were American Robin and Hermit Thrush. Both are larger than most potential prey, and the hawks took both more frequently than expected.

(BirdWatching Magazine)

WHERE FEATHER COLORS COME FROM

by Eldon Greij

Can you remember a time when you were staring into a tree, waiting for a mostly hidden bird to move, when a brightly plumed bird suddenly flew in and landed in full view?

It might have been a Baltimore Oriole, Indigo Bunting, Yellow Warbler, or one of my favorites: Scarlet Tanager or American Redstart. On each one, enchanting colors and striking patterns combine to create extraordinary beauty.

Our eyes perceive a range of color in the visible spectrum, from the wavelengths of blue and violet to the longer wavelength of red. If a feather lacks pigments entirely, all light is reflected and the color we see is white.

The two most common pigments in birds are known as melanins and carotenoids. Melanins: Possessed by almost all birds, these produce black, grays, and browns, as well as dull reds and yellows. Radiating arms of cells discharge melanin into some regions of a developing feather but not others. If you've ever marveled at a bird's intricate barring and spotting, you have witnessed the incredible precision of the process. In addition to producing color, melanins also confer strength to feathers and minimize abrasion.

Carotenoids: Bright reds, oranges, and yellows results from these, which are manufactured by plants and ingested by birds while feeding. The red of male House Finches is due to carotenoids and varies from intense red to dull orange. Researchers have shown that females preferentially select males that are bright red. They seem to know that vibrantly colored males are eating a carotenoid-rich diet that reflects a territory with good food resources.

Colors are important for avian courtship, and they add to our enjoyment as birdwatchers. Whether formed by wavelengths being selectively absorbed and reflected by pigments or scattered and reflected by feather structure, the infinite variety of colors adds to the amazing beauty of birds.



Founded in 1974, the Hilton Head Audubon Society uses 100% of local membership dues for programs and activities in our own area. Your local dues provide support for the following:

- Monthly programs
- Field Trips
- Citizen Science projects such as the Christmas Bird Count
- Audubon Newhall Preserve
- Education Outreach programs such as Audubon Adventures in local schools
- Various learning opportunities

We need your help to continue these activities. All of the above are possible through our LOCAL DUES! We do NOT receive national funds for any of our local programs. Please join the Hilton Head Island chapter of the Audubon Society and support these local programs. Remember.....100% of the chapter dues stay LOCAL!

For membership information, contact: enews@hiltonheadaudubon.org

Please detach and mail or bring to the next meeting.

Local Membership: select either 1 year individual \$15 or 1 year family \$25

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 Field Trips Conservation Education Christmas Bird Count Publicity/Programs other _____

Please mail to: P.O. Box 6185 – Hilton Head Island, SC - 29938

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Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938

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MAY - SEPTEMBER 2013 Calendar

MAY

- Thurs. May 2 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Armstrong-Hack Conference Room at Honey Horn
- Mon. May 6 **Annual Picnic** 5:00 pm
at Dolphin Point - Hilton Head Plantation
- Mon. May 13 **Special Museum & Audubon Butterfly Trip** 8:30 am
- Thurs. May 23 **Field Trip** 8:00 am
Pinckney Island

SEPTEMBER

- Thurs. Sept. 5 **Board Meeting** 1:30 pm
at the Armstrong-Hack Conference Room at Honey Horn
- Thurs. Sept. 12 **Monthly Meeting** at Honey Horn 3:00 pm

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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, in the 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 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.