



# Ecobon

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Rick Riebesell*

### VALUE

Value includes two concepts: (1) the importance, worth, or usefulness of something; and (2) a person's principles or standards of behavior leading to a judgment of what is important. The second enables the first. The judgment of what is important by virtue of intrinsic principles will control what is deemed to be important. For most, the judgment of what fosters economic well being determines importance and worth.

We band together as the Audubon Society for the most part because we value nature. We judge nature to be important and hold it as an important factor in our lives. When others do not perceive nature as important and act to alter or remove that which we see as important, we want to do something about it. To this end, a part of the history of Hilton Head Island is instructive.

What follows is derived from *Profits and Politics in Paradise* by Michael N. Danielson (available in the local interest section at Barnes & Noble).

In the fall of 1969, Badische Anilin and Soda Fabrik AG (BASF), a German chemical firm, announced plans to build a \$100 million plant at Victoria Bluff (now Waddell Mariculture Center) in Beaufort County, located about three miles from Hilton Head Island. South Carolina officials, giddy with excitement to industrialize and thereby improve the economic condition of the coastal area, offered many publicly-funded benefits to BASF. There was a state assembled tract of land priced attractively, provision for a utility district to furnish water from the Savannah River and deal with the estimated 2.5 million gallons of waste on a daily basis, development of a deep-water port accomplished by dredging ten miles of channel into Port Royal Sound. Also offered were a rail line, new roads, state sponsored training programs, and five-year exemptions from state and county taxes. Negotiations with BASF were kept secret, and no study was made of the probable effects of pollution.

After the announcement, Charles Fraser and Fred Hack, the initial developers of the island, with island residents and businesses organized into the Hilton Head Island Community Association and formed a task force to examine the effects of the proposed complex. The task force as well as local fisherman determined to oppose the proposition. A legal attack was led by lawyers hired by Sea Pines. Environmental and scientific support was organized by Orion Hack, who advocated convening the scientists and environmentalists into one effort. This culminated in more than fifty highly qualified participants attending a symposium which attracted national attention and recommended a moratorium on construction urging further study of the BASF proposal.

Having established the BASF proposal as a serious environmental issue with national consequences, the opposing forces sent to dock in Washington The Captain Dove, a shrimp boat carrying freshly harvested shrimp from Port Royal Sound and petitions bearing the names of 35,000 people. Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel met the boat, and six months after the announcement of the BASF proposal, Hickel declared that BASF would have to prove that the plant would not pollute the surrounding waters in order to get a permit. There was considerable speculation on the part of South Carolina officials as to whether Hickel had such authority, but the fuss was enough to persuade BASF to look elsewhere for its site.

There would be other efforts at industrial development on the South Carolina coast close to Hilton Head Island, but the economic legacy of the battle was that the resort and tourism aspect of Hilton Head Island would prevail over industrialization of the area.

*(continued on page 4)*

# HHI Audubon

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### Bird House Construction

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### Bird Seed Sale

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### Christmas Bird Count

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### Sun City Representative

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Website: [www.hiltonheadaudubon.org](http://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.

## APRIL PROGRAM *by: Kathy Greider, Program Director*

Thursday, April 10, 2014 at 3:00 pm

Coastal Discovery Museum at Honey Horn, 70 Honey Horn Drive, Sea Island Room

### "Life and Death in the Bush Veldt" with George Cathcart

George Cathcart is an award-winning nature photographer based in Bluffton, who travels the world in search of nature's wonders on land and under the sea. In recent years, his travels have taken him to Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and the Caribbean, as well as throughout the United States.

"My aim as a photographer is to connect viewers in an emotional, even spiritual way with the creatures and landscapes with which we share Planet Earth," George says. A passionate environmentalist, George hopes that his images will inspire others to care more and take action to protect all our fellow Earthlings.

Wildlife of the air, land and sea are George's primary subjects, but his travels have also allowed him to photograph people in their natural habitats in places like Thailand, Cuba, Jordan, Cambodia and Fiji. A former photojournalist, George has a unique ability to capture the stories of the places he visits and tell them through his images.



George first began photographing the world around him when he was serving in the U.S. Army in Vietnam in 1968. He quickly developed a passion for the camera. After he returned home, he studied journalism at George Washington University in Washington, DC, and he later worked as a photographer, reporter, editor and columnist for the *Island Packet*. He also freelanced and sold stories and photographs to local, regional and national outdoor magazines. He produced a multi-media slide show about his 1982 thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail.

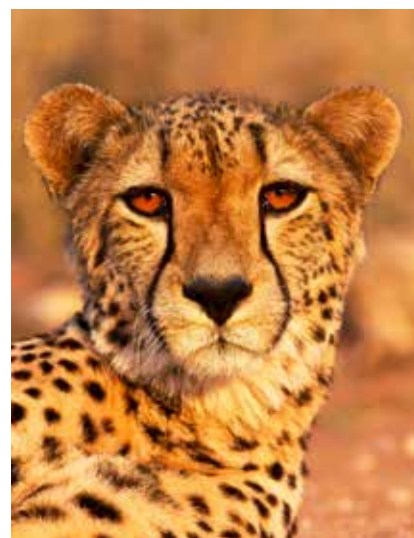
Photography became primarily a hobby when George's career turned to public relations for higher education and government. But his enthusiasm for photography was always there, and when he learned to scuba dive in 2000, George's desire to share what he saw beneath the waves drove him back to photography with a passion.

When he retired from federal service in 2010, photography became his full-time occupation, fulfilling a dream that started more than 45 years ago. He is a member of the North American Nature Photographers Association and the Carolinas Nature Photographers Association, and he is a certified Lowcountry Master Naturalist.

"Life and Death in the Bush Veldt" is a 25-minute slide show of the wildlife in Kruger National Park in South Africa, using photographs George took during a two-week photo safari in 2012. The show emphasizes the precarious and intertwined lives of predators and prey in the shrubby grasslands of southern Africa.

For more information regarding George's work -- go to [www.finsfeathersfoto.com](http://www.finsfeathersfoto.com) or contact George at [george.cathcart@gmail.com](mailto:george.cathcart@gmail.com).

This is going to be an outstanding program. Hilton Head Island area photographers are especially invited to attend the program.



## NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Jack Greenshields

A police report was made regarding suspicious activity/property damage at the Preserve. The old bench near the entryway Newhall trail was pulled out of the ground with the concrete footings and was beaten against the donation post. The donation post won the encounter and the bench was heavily damaged. Matt Mattoon brought it to his shop and did the repairs. Bob Clemens and Jim Currie installed the bench in the proper location including the use of more concrete.

The Town of Hilton Head Public Safety Committee has recommended that the installation of a bicycle /pedestrian crossing be considered for inclusion in the next capital plan. It is now being reviewed by the Capital Improvement Plan Update Committee. We have identified a location for a bicycle rack and will order a modest unit shortly at a cost of approximately \$250.

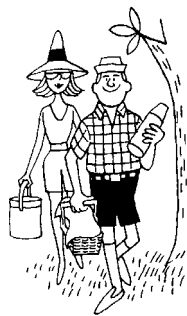
Tom Snell of Snell and Associates ( Gum Tree Nursery) is working on the cost estimate for some parking lot improvements and a separate exit route through the area cleared for the fuel break. Both the entrance and exit path would join in a wider entrance /exit where the current gate is. No protected trees would need to be removed. A new gate will be required. Since the Sea Pines neighbors are concerned that a gate which would only stop vehicles from entering would be insufficient from a security perspective, Tom Hennessey is working with CSA to determine if there could be a cost sharing approach. Upon completion of the cost estimates and approval by the Newhall Committee and Audubon Board, the Town will need to a permit application.

Guided Walks are again being offered on Thursday mornings at 10 am through May. I did two of these in February, and Marie McClune, Kay Grinnell, Joanne McMenamin, and Mary Alice Walker will each lead walks in March.

A volunteer workday was conducted the morning of February 22.

### Mark Your Calendars!

## Annual Picnic May 8th



## RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Spring is here and our early Spring migrants and Summer arrivals are beginning to show up in our area. Northern Parulas, Yellow-throated Warblers, White-eyed Vireos and migrant American Robins have been seen and heard singing. Our Winter birds and ducks will be leaving us soon.

Rare birds reported this month were: Long-tailed Duck at nearby Tybee Island and irruptive species Red-breasted Nuthatches at two homes on HHI.

Out-of-Season birds sighted included: An apparent overwintering Summer Tanager on HHI in February and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at two HHI homes. Sadly, the Hummer that has faithfully come to Dottie Bass's home feeders EVERY DAY for an unbelievable FIVE years has stop visiting there and is believed to have succumbed. This has to be some kind of a longevity record!

Uncommon species found were: Peregrine Falcon, Redhead (duck) and White-breasted Nuthatch.

Other 'good finds' included: Bald Eagle with Eaglet in nest (2), Wilson's Snipe, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, >1000 Dunlins at Fish Haul Creek Park, Eastern Meadowlark and many Cedar Waxwings.



Thanks to those reported their sightings: Rick/Pam Riebesell, Natalie Hefter, Bill Nicol, Kathy/Grant Creider, Shelia/Roger Johnson, Karen Marts, Diane Churchill, Carol Clemens, Fran/Danny Baer, Dottie Bass, Miriam Waterhouse, Cindy/Ken Groff, Joanne McMemamin, Jane/Adie Hester, Deb Beamer, Dick Phillips, Wendy Hansen, Tom LeBoeuf, Rita/Joe Kernan, Mary Ann Lueckel and several visitors.

To report a bird sighting that is Accidental, Rare, Uncommon, Out-Of-Season, First-Of-The-Year (FOTY) or First-Of-The-Season (FOTS) or a species that you consider to be a 'good find' e-mail: [BirdingFriends@yahoo.com](mailto:BirdingFriends@yahoo.com) or call 843-432-2661 (MUST dial the 843). Please state your full name, the bird species sighted, date and location of your sighting and other pertinent information about your sighting.

Now that the weather is warming after a cold Winter and the trees and plants are budding and blooming, it is a great time to get outside to look for early Summer arrivals and Spring migrants at your favorite birding spots as well as to find Winter species that have not yet departed. Please report your unusual and FOTY birds to Birding Friends.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Rick Riebesell (continued from page 1)*

In most geographical locations there is no such economic legacy and nature is not well preserved. Generally, the value of industrialization is perceived to be far greater than the value attributed to nature. That it is different on Hilton Head Island is due in large part to the perception of Charles Fraser, the initial developer of the residential development concept used on the Island, that nature was not only valuable for its essence but also valuable as an attraction to tourists and real estate buyers. The genius of Fraser was to add nature to his real estate inventory and put measures in place to assure that nature would be preserved to a significant extent notwithstanding development. Subsequent developers learned well from Fraser. When DuPont tried to develop its chemical plant in Port Royal Sound, it was real estate developers who led the battle to defeat the proposal.

Nature was valuable to the real estate developers, perhaps not in the same way it is valuable to Audubon Society members, but the net result was favorable to both.

The value tourism and real estate interests placed on natural attractions saved Port Royal Sound. Similarly and on a broader level, the recognition of the economic value of natural attractions on Hilton Head Island has saved those that remain. Where value is perceived on an economic basis, the aesthetic value of nature will be preserved. As persons concerned with environmental preservation, this is a cornerstone concept of our activity. Our best tactic is perception of value. If those who would alter or destroy nature can be made to understand the economic detriment of such actions, they are less likely to alter or destroy that which is more valuable left untouched.

Perception occurs through education and sharing. That is the Audubon Society's role and strength. Those who try to identify a bird will be less inclined to remove its habitat. But if that fails, the perception that removal of that habitat will make it more difficult to feed one's family may be determinative.

It is not enough to link nature with aesthetics. We must share our knowledge to create the perception of value in natural resources on a more essential level than aesthetics. An area may not be perceived to be an economic asset until hundreds of birders come each year to observe birds migrating to the area. What makes the birders come? How do they know about the area? Answering questions such as these is our role. The more of an economic attraction nature becomes, the better the chances that it will be preserved. While the intrinsic values of different groups and different people may vary considerably, the resource generally recognized as valuable is more likely to be preserved.



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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## Overnight Birding Excursion to St Augustine, FL April 21 and April 22

By Kathy Greider, Program Director

Bill Nicol (Conservation Committee Chair, HHIAS) and I are planning an overnight trip to St Augustine, FL to visit the Alligator Farm which does not seem quite right because we have lots of alligators on our own island and we are Bird Watcher not Alligator Watchers!

**BUT WAIT!!!!** I neglected to tell you there is a **WONDERFUL** Wading Bird Rookery there also.

The St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park is one of Florida's oldest and most treasured attractions. Since 1893, it has provided visitors with exciting and educational opportunities to interact with a wide range of crocodilians, reptiles, mammals and birds. Located on Anastasia Island in St. Augustine, The Alligator Farm features natural exhibits, wildlife shows and educational demonstrations. It is the only place in the world where visitors can see every species of alligator, crocodile, caiman and gharial. In 1992, The Alligator Farm was designated a U.S. Historic District. For more information, visit [www.alligatorfarm.com](http://www.alligatorfarm.com).

Native herons, egrets, ibis, spoonbills and wood storks seek the security of the Alligator Swamp to roost and raise their young. With hundreds of alligators swimming beneath the oak branches, the birds know their young are safe from tree-climbing predators. Our wooden walkway allows for incredibly intimate views of Florida's magnificent wading birds on their nests. Photographers achieve award-winning shots here every year. Visit from March through June to see the most nesting activity with the birds in full breeding plumage.

The Rookery Blog includes status updates and natural history information about the native bird rookery at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm. The natural alligator swamp area of the park attracts hundreds of pairs of wading birds that nest literally feet away from the boardwalk. This blog contains a plethora of nesting activity data so photographers and bird watchers can best plan their visit.

The birds start arriving in February and continue till August. A list of the birds we should see in Mid - April.

**Early April** - Wood stork chicks start hatching. Great egret chicks are starting to get to a good size. Snowys, Little blues, and Tri-colored are laying eggs. Cattle egrets start showing up.

**Mid April** - The Green herons start nesting within the park (not the rookery). Still lots of displaying birds of every species.

**Late April** - Rookery is mass chaos. Snowy chicks start hatching. Wood stork chicks are screaming constantly. Great egret chicks are pretty big. All of the smaller species have arrived.

**Early May** - There are chicks of every species in the rookery at this time, but still displaying from all species with the exception of the wood storks. Green heron chicks hatching out within the park. Spoonbill eggs due to hatch soon.

The Rookery Blog includes status updates and natural history information about the native bird rookery at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm. The natural alligator swamp area of the park attracts hundreds of pairs of wading birds that nest literally feet away from the boardwalk. This blog contains a plethora of nesting activity data so photographers and bird watchers can best plan their visit. Regularly recorded rookery updates are also available at (904) 824-3337 ext. 23 and check out their blog for information regarding the Photo Contest the sponsor each year. <http://www.alligatorfarm.com/rookery>

### Details for the Trip -

Leave HHI approximately at 7:30 a.m. April 21<sup>st</sup>. We should arrive by 11 a.m. in St Augustine.

Admission to the Alligator Farm is \$22.95 or a bit less if we get enough people to qualify for a Group Discount. They also have a AAA Discount

We will wait till the day of the trip to decide what birding location we go to first. We should try to go to the Rookery on the day with the best weather forecast. We have not decided what other location we will bird but there are lots of other great spots that we can talk about and decide where to bird.

We will be staying at the Fairfield Inn just off I-95 for the night. I have been able to get us a rate of \$76.49 per room (with up to 4 people) or less depending on how many rooms we book.

If you plan to attend I would call them and reserve a room at the Senior Discount Rate and we can get the rate reduced after we have our count. They have 23 double rooms available at this time.

Transportation is up to the individual, but we will car pool and plan plenty of stops along the way for "potty breaks" I am sure I left something out so feel free to call me 404.313.8208 or email [greider38@gmail.com](mailto:greider38@gmail.com) to ask your questions. Also, the Meet a Bird in April will be Meet a Place (Wading Bird Rookery at the Alligator Farm).

Fairfield Inn -- 305 Outlet Mall Blvd St. Augustine Florida 32084 USA -- 1-904-810-9892

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## ORIOLE'S ELABORATE NESTS



North America's orioles and their close relative build intricate nests. Baltimore Oriole, for example, weaves a sock-like nest that hangs from tree branches. A lot goes into a successful oriole nest, including the choice of appropriate plant (and sometimes man-made) materials, secure attachment to branches, and careful weaving to create a strong structure.

Studies found on birds that construct elaborate nests indicate that each species has an instinctive set of standardized nest-building methods. Many birds, however, vary aspects of their nest construction, such as the direction in which they weave materials. They apparently adapt their innate techniques to the grasses and other structural components they have at hand, the kind and shape of branch they are attaching the nest to. Birds become more efficient with experience, and the nests of experienced birds are often neater and better built. Practice makes perfect!

*Julie Craves, BirdWatching Magazine*

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## BOOK REVIEW

### ***“ON THE WING” To the Edge of the Earth with the Peregrine Falcon*** by Alan Tennant

This book transports us from the windswept flats of the Texas barrier islands - where the tundra falcons pause during their springtime journey north - to the Arctic, and then back south, through Mexico, Belize, and into the Caribbean, in a hilariously picaresque and bumpy flight.

Tennant's partner, George Vose, a septuagenarian World War II vet trusts his instincts as much as his instruments. The two men nearly lose their lives and run afoul of the law in the race to keep their birds in their view and their rattletrap Cessna gassed up and running.

Praise from Victor Emmanuel -

“The peregrine falcon is the most famous of the world's raptors. This book provides a wealth of information about this marvelous creature and also recounts an exciting adventure. I highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in birds and the natural world”



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## A SMALL SHOREBIRD'S ASTONISHING MIGRATION

A male Red-necked Phalarope wearing a light-level geolocator has upended conventional wisdom about its species and revealed one of the world's great bird migrations.

It revealed that the phalarope had made an epic 16,000 mile round - trip journey: From Fetlar, located 155 northeast of the mainland, it crossed the Atlantic via Iceland and Greenland, headed south down the eastern coast of North America, flew over the Caribbean and Central America, and ended up off the coast of Ecuador and Peru. Then, after wintering in the Pacific, it reversed its route and returned to Fetlar.

Red-necked Phalarope breeds in arctic and sub-arctic wetlands in Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Russia, Scandinavia and Iceland, and it winters at sea, primarily off the Pacific coast of South America, in Indonesia, and in the Arabian Sea.

Scottish Islands host the only remaining breeding populations in the United Kingdom: 15 to 50 nesting males each year. Ornithologists had assumed that Scotland's birds wintered in the Arabian Sea, but the bird from Fetlar threw a wrench into those assumptions.

Only a handful of species, including Sooty Shearwater, Arctic Tern, Red Knot, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Northern Wheatear, cover longer distances each year.

*BirdWatching magazine*



## New Members

Please welcome several new local Audubon Members who have joined between late February and mid-March.

They are:

Robert and Marilyn Black	Julie and David Desjardins
Nancy Hayes	Anne Lang
Mary Mathis	Ed Nash
Betsy Pehrson	



Remember that your local Audubon dues are good for 1 year from the date we process your dues. Courtesy dues reminders are emailed the quarter your dues are due. Have questions on your local membership? Need to update your information? Just email Carol C. at [clemens318@roadrunner.com](mailto:clemens318@roadrunner.com)

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Having trouble reading the Ecobon on line? Here's a tip to help you. Once you click on the link to the newest Ecobon, it will open as a pdf document. Look at the top and there is a tool bar. You can use the drop down arrow to increase the size of the font to something easier to read. If you prefer, you can also use the + and - tools to increase the size as needed.



### *Experience Green Earth Day Celebration at Old Town Bluffton*

HHIAS is planning to have a booth at the **Earth Day Celebration in Old Town Bluffton on April 26<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 4 pm** and we are looking for a few people to help out. Bill Nicol and Kathy Greider will be at the booth all day and we would love some other HHIAS members to help out. We need 2 people for each of the two shifts 9:45 am – 1:00 pm and 12:45 pm to 4:00 pm. Please call Kathy at 404.313.8208 to set up a time to help. Thanks in advance for your help.

We will be talking to the crowd about how they can help all living things by picking up litter in the area they live in and on the beach. We will have some animal pictures that children can color and some photos showing what litter looks like inside sea birds and sea turtles. Not a pretty site – but a powerful one.

Check out the web site -- <http://www.experiencegreen.org/earthday.html> and see all the great activities. There is even a May River Cleanup prior to the Earth Day Celebration. The May River Cleanup fits right into what the HHIAS's message will be for Earth Day. **Keep Our Island Free of Litter - so the birds, turtles, fish and all other living things can survive.**



### **THANK YOU, BIRD SEED BUYERS!**

Our annual fund raiser was completed on March 1 with nearly 200 bags weighing over 3200 lbs sold to 49 members and friends. This was a showing of strong continuing support for our educational programs which involves both volunteers and purchased learning materials.

We gratefully thank Virginia Culter for sponsoring this event at Wild Birds Unlimited each year, and appreciate the many supporters who get the best selection of fresh bird seeds on the Island.

*Ed Nash*



*Wild Birds Unlimited*

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

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# Audubon

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ECOBON

P. O. Box 6185

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938

Title: Ecobon

Issue Date: April 2014

Frequency: Monthly Sept.-May

Organization: Hilton Head Island Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 6185  
Hilton Head, South Carolina 29938

Issue #: 345

## APRIL ~ MAY 2014 Calendar

### APRIL

Thurs. Apr. 3 Board Meeting ..... 10:00 am  
at the Country Club of Hilton Head

Thurs. Apr. 10 Monthly Meeting at Honey Horn ..... 3:00 pm

Mon-Tues. Apr. 21 & 22  
Overnight Field Tip .....leaving at 7:30 am  
to St Augustine, Florida

Sat. Apr. 26 Earth Day Event in Bluffton .....9:30 - 4:00 pm

### MAY

Thurs. May 1 Board Meeting ..... 10:00 am  
at the Country Club of Hilton Head

Thurs. May 8 Annual Picnic ..... TBA

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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. Meetings are held at the Coastal Discovery Museum, 70 Honey Horn Drive. 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.