



May 2014
No. 346

Ecobon

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Rick Riebesell*

What We Have Done

"Look what I have done!" Whenever I feel compelled to say that, it brings to mind my son, many years ago, proudly showing me the contents of a potty training seat bowl. Of course, I was delighted with what he had done, but there were certain aspects of the performance I did not want to experience in close proximity. In spite of the surprise offering, I was able to demonstrate the appropriate enthusiasm for his accomplishment. At the time I wished I had been able to offer my praise without him feeling the need to present his accomplishment in such a way so I would notice. Often in life, when you have to call attention to your own accomplishments, the time for appropriate perception has passed and often the reaction is not completely sincere.

Nevertheless, in an organization, where not all members are aware of all the activities of the group, from time to time it is a good idea to say: "Look what we have done!" The Hilton Head Audubon Society year begins June 1, and our main activity period is from September to May. We use the summer to recharge and plan. Now is a good time to look back at what we have done over the last year. Yet there still is the danger that reactions will not completely disclose the complete thoughts of the recipient. In this case, we are not just after approval or continued support. Although the Society in the past year has accomplished a great deal, we need to know how we could have done better and what we should have tried to do. We are conducting a membership survey to get ideas and reactions. We will continue to invite your support, suggestions, and comments. We need more than approval and encouragement. We need your ideas and, especially, your involvement.

In our fiscal year 2013 – 2014 we did the following: held regular meetings with programs in September, October, November, January, February, March, and April; presented Barry Lowes with his review of birds likely to be seen on the Christmas Bird Count in December; conducted the Christmas Bird Count; published the monthly Ecobon newsletter; established a viable database of members (over 140 current members) enabling email communication and local dues collection; sponsored several field trips; held a four-class series called Introduction to Birding; conducted group educational activities; maintained active management of the Newhall Preserve; honored retiring Board members; conducted a bird seed sale fundraising event; commented on the development around the Shelter Cove Lagoon; and will end the year with the annual picnic on May 15.

Our nominating committee issued its report as follows: President – Rick Riebesell, Vice-president – Robert Rommel, Secretary – Marianne Currie, Treasurer – John Faucette and Pauline Jones, Conservation Chairs – Bill Nicol and Robert Rommel, Programs Chairs – Kathy and Grant Greider, Membership Chairs – Carol Clemens and Fran Baer, Newhall Chairs – Jack Greenshields and Bob Clemens, Christmas Bird Count Liaisons – Susan and Kelly Murphy, Ecobon Editor – Joan Wilson, Immediate Past President - Natalie Hefter. This report was approved by the membership at the April meeting.

The news about the nominating committee report is that for the most part we have been able to place two people as chairs of with each committee. However, we were unable to fill the positions for education, publicity, and field trips. While we have increased involvement with some committees, we are without leadership in certain areas. Over the summer we need to fill those positions with people who will help us maintain and surpass what we have done this last year. Education involves the introduction to birding series, school programs, and group activities. Publicity now involves the aspect of the Internet and social media, as well as more traditional media activities. Field trips involves setting up regular field trips and encouraging member involvement. Take a look at what we have done. Tell us what you think. Become involved. Help us do better next year.

HHI Audubon

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Marianne Currie 681-8525

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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.

Annual Picnic Info on page 4

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: **Thursday, May 15th**

New Members

Please welcome the following new members who have joined our local Audubon Society between mid-March and mid-April.

Steve Black

Margaret Collins

Walt and Hedy Draves

Paula Elmgren

Glenn and Susan Kirk

Ruth Anne Shuman

Thanks also to current members who have renewed their dues. Unsure if your dues are up to date? Have questions about your membership? Need to update your contact information?

Please email Carol C. at cclemens318@roadrunner.com

BIRDS HELP INVASIVE PLANTS SPREAD IN THE GALAPAGOS

Today, the islands of the Galapagos host more alien plant species than native species. Guava, blackberry, and lantana are among the island's worst offenders. It is native birds - as well as lizards and tortoises - that are assisting the alien invasion, however, according to a report in Proceedings of the Royal Society B by Ruben H. Heleno and a team of international colleagues.

Bird droppings are a highly effective way that the alien plants are spread. Ground finches and mockingbirds seem to be among the most effective seed distributors. The seasonal availability of fruit might also be exacerbating the problem.

Most of the islands' native fruit growth will peak in May. But the alien fruit is abundantly available at other seasons: blackberries in February and guava in late summer. By offering these tempting treats in the "off seasons" when local native fruit is in short supply, the alien plants have an advantage. They are highly attractive, luscious, and get an aerial transportation-boost through the birds' droppings.

Bird Watcher's Digest

Christmas Bird Count

The updated Ten Year History of Christmas Bird Counts for Hilton Head Audubon is now available on the Hilton Head Audubon website (www.hiltonheadaudubon.org) under "Publications" and "Events."

Kelly and Susan Murphy

NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE

by Jack Greenshields

The larger of our two alligators is gone missing again. This fellow has left the Preserve pond about this time for the past several years and returns in late summer. This probably has something to do with breeding season. The smaller resident alligator now has the pond to itself and can be seen thrashing around feeding on the large frog population on the shoreline.

Our Great Horned Owl is back again and has been noted by a number of visitors in the logbook. He is spotted roosting in a tree near the end of the main Newhall trail.

Roy Havens and I installed a new Wood Duck house by the edge of the pond. This was obtained at no cost from the SCDNR Ducks Unlimited grant fund and is stamped "manufactured by the SC Department of Corrections". Committee member and birdhouse construction expert Jim Currie built four bluebird houses which Audubon donated to the Beaufort County Open Land Trust which I installed at the Widgeon Point property.

Thursday 10am guided walks continue through May and have been well attended. Joanne McMenamin, Karen Marts, and Joan Shulman conducted walks in April and Rita Kernan, Marie McClune, and Mary Alice Walker will be leading walks in May. Mary Alice Walker and I also conducted a program for an USCB OLLI class. After the summer heat abides, these walks will again continue for September, October, and November.

Bob Clemens has organized our property documents and has reviewed them from a legal perspective. We are not deviating from covenant requirements.

Steve Rupprecht and I installed a number of plants donated to Newhall by the Sun City Garden Club who had thinned out their butterfly and hummingbird garden. We also installed some new plants purchased from the Spring Island Trust Native Plant Project.

Efforts will continue this summer on the entrance gate enhancement, installing a bicycle rack, and a modest expansion of the parking area.

**Annual Picnic Info
on page 4**

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE:

Thursday, May 15th

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

It has been a very active and interesting birding Spring in our HHI area. Spring migrants were moving through our area and Summer arrivals were continuing to show up here while some of our winter visitors were still around.

Accidental bird species reported in our area this month were: Painted Redstart in Sun City - Hilton Head and Black-billed Magpie on nearby Harbor Island. Both were very unusual Western US and Mexican species that did not return for others to observe and confirm.

Rare species found this month included: Clay-colored Sparrow and Ash-throated Flycatchers at Savannah NWR, Sandhill Crane on Daufuskie Island, Western Kingbird at Hutchinson Island again this year, Swainson's Warbler in Savannah and Hooded Warbler on Skidaway Island.

Uncommon species reported include: Irruptive Pine Siskin, Prairie Warbler, Louisiana and Northern Waterthrushes, Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites, late Winter and House Wrens, American Kestrel, Merlin, White Pelicans, Glossy Ibis, endangered Piping Plover, White-breasted Nuthatch, Baltimore Oriole, Black-necked Stilt, Wild Turkey and Mottled Duck.

It has been a good migration season for wood warblers to date with 13 species sighted including: Prothonotary, Black & White, Yellow-throated, Palm, Pine and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Northern Parula, Common Yellowthroat plus the rare and uncommon warblers mentioned above.

FOTY birds reported included: Painted Bunting, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Green Heron, Cattle Egret, White-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Great Crested Flycatcher and Chuck-Will's-Widow.

Other 'good finds' were: Bald Eagles and Ospreys with chicks in nests, Barred Owl, Hermit Thrush, Clapper Rail, Gray Catbird, Black Scoter, Sora, Yellow & Black-crowned Night Herons and Greater & Lesser Yellowlegs.

Thanks to all reporting their finds: Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Annette Hausman, Wendy Hansen, Cindy/Ken Groff, Jane Hester, Shelia/Roger Johnson, Dottie Bass, Miriam Waterhouse, Joanne McMemamin, Susan Thomas, Dorothy Mosier, Jim Grove, Karen Marts, Karen Peterson, Mary Ann/David Lueckel, Kathy/Grant Greider, Ally McNair, Pauline Jones, Russ Wigh, Carmine Sesa, Dick Phillips, Rita Kernan, George Cathcart, Diana Churchill 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 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.

Have a good Summer and follow the nesting birds in your area! Remember our Fall migration starts as early as late July. Continue to report your 'good bird finds' to Birding Friends. See you in the Fall!



Hilton Head Island Audubon Society

Annual Picnic

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: Thursday, May 15th

Where:

Recreation Center at Dolphin Head, Hilton Head Plantation

When:

5:00 p.m. Walk around, enjoy the area, and relax with friends!

5:30 p.m. Dinner

6:30 p.m. **Sally Krebs**, Town of Hilton Head Sustainable Practices Coordinator, will present the program:

"The Piping Plovers of Hilton Head"

Cost:

\$10 per member / \$10 per guest

May be paid at the picnic (by check or correct currency) and includes a donation to the Piping Plover Project

Food:

HHIAS will provide Fried Chicken*, plates, silverware, napkins, soft drinks, and water.

Each family is asked to bring a side dish.

Last names A - O bring a salad or vegetable plate

Last names P - Z bring a dessert

You may bring adult beverages if desired.

Insect Repellent is suggested!

*If Fried Chicken is not a desired a main dish, please bring something else for yourself.

Reserve by 5/13 by emailing: audubonhhirsyp@gmail.com



- Include the NAMES of EACH PERSON attending.
- Do you need a gate pass to enter Hilton Head Plantation?
- Note: The Plantation's policy requires the driver to show a driver's license to receive the pass..... so have it handy.
- Indicate the DISH you are bringing to share.

HOW THE ORIOLE GOT HIS NAME



It was not unusual for ancient cures to be associated with color absorption, such as wrapping a patient in a red blanket to take away a fever's fiery heat. The Old World oriole's Greek name was 'ikteros', meaning jaundice.

Pliny the Elder told of a jaundiced man seeing an oriole that was the color of his ailment. Immediately the man was cured and the bird died.

Early American naturalists were apt to call birds that looked familiar after the ones back home, especially if their habits seemed similar. This is why the bird's common name, oriole, on both sides of the Atlantic, is from 'Aureolus', Latin for 'golden'.

The Baltimore oriole's name, wrote Mark Catesby, "comes from the Lord Baltimore's Coat of Arms. The lord was governor of Maryland, and the Coat of Arms was in the same colors as the bird's plumage.

From "100 Birds and How They Got Their Names" by Diana Wells

More expert tips on how to attract Orioles to your backyard!

- Start early. Your best chance of attracting orioles is when they first arrive in early spring.
- Use the same nectar recipe for orioles as you do for hummingbirds-four parts boiled water to one part sugar. Keep nectar fresh, and don't use food coloring.
- These birds are attracted to the color orange, so look for a sugar-water feeder specifically designed for orioles.
- Make sure your feeder has large enough perches and drinking ports. It's not unusual for orioles to try hummingbird feeders, but their bills are often too big.
- Orioles love the color and taste of oranges. Offer orange halves on a branch or feeder. Orioles will also eat grape jelly. Serve the jelly in an open dish or cup, and keep it fresh.
- When placing the oriole feeder in your yard, think like a bird. Instead of hiding the feeder under an awning or tree, put it out in the open so the birds can see it while flying overhead.
- Hang your feeder near a birdbath. If your bath has a bubbler, even better. Orioles love the sight and sound of moving water.
- Put out yarn and string. Orioles and other backyard songbirds will use it for their nests.
- If you don't attract orioles in your first year, keep at it. It often takes several seasons to find a following.

A Multitude of Residences kill more Birds than a Handful of Skyscrapers

Between 365 and 988 million birds are killed annually by building collisions in the U.S. say researchers from the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Migratory Birds. "Among other national estimates, only predation by free-ranging domestic cats is estimated to cause a greater amount of mortality."

Collisions with buildings between 4 and 11 stories tall account for roughly 56 percent of overall mortality, say the analysts. Residence 1-3 stories tall account for 44 percent. It was found that the six species that have been listed as national Birds of Conservation Concern due to their declining populations are highly vulnerable to building collisions: Golden-winged Warbler, Painted Bunting, Canada Warbler, Wood Thrush, Kentucky Warbler, and Worm-eating Warbler.

From BirdWatchingDaily

FACT OR FICTION?

Hummingbirds feed only on flowers that are red, long, slender, and tubular.

Although hummingbirds seem to have an instinctive preference for flowers of this color and shape, they will visit blooms of all sizes, shapes, and colors. If you watch the hummers in your backyard, you'll notice that they get nectar whenever it is available.

Long, thin floral tubes are inaccessible to many insects, so flowers of this shape are often richer in nectar. The long bills and extensible tongues of hummingbirds enable them to reach the nectar deep within. Hummingbirds also obtain nectar in wider-mouthed blossoms by piercing the base of the floral tubes. Purple can be a popular color.

Lynn Hassler in Bird Watcher's Digest



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MAY - SEPTEMBER 2014 Calendar

MAY

- Thurs. May 1 Board Meeting 10:00 am
at the Country Club of Hilton Head
- Thurs. May 8 Annual Picnic 5:00 pm
at Hilton Head Plantation

SEPTEMBER

- Thurs. Sept. 4 Board Meeting 10:00 am
at the Country Club of Hilton Head
- Thurs. Sept. 11 Monthly Meeting 3:00 pm
at Honey Horn

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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 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.