



November 2015
No. 358

Ecobon

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

NOVEMBER PROGRAM *by: Kathy Greider, Program Director*

Thursday, November 12, 2015 at 3:00 pm

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

"A Bird in the Hand: Bird Banding on Kiawah Island" presented by Aaron Given

Our guest speaker this month is Aaron Given. He is originally from suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. He studied at the Southern Illinois University and received his B.S. in Zoology in 2000. In 2005 he attended the Southeast Missouri State University while studying the wintering Yellow Rails in coastal Texas to write his thesis for his M.S. in Wildlife Biology. Aaron earned his Certified Wildlife Biologist degree during this time also. The certificate is endorsed by The Wildlife Society.

From 2006-2008 Aaron worked as Wildlife Biologist for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area. Since 2008 he has been the Assistant Wildlife Biologist for the Town of Kiawah Island. Aaron will provide a great deal of information regarding his research through his bird banding programs on Kiawah Island. Some of the birds he will discuss are: Seaside, Nelson's and Saltmarsh Sparrows, Painted Buntings and winter song birds.



FREE ~ Open to the public without registration. **VISITORS ARE WELCOME!**

For More Information Contact: Coastal Discovery Museum at 843.689.6767

or visit our website: www.hiltonheadaudubon.org



Our second field trip for the fall season

- Location: Fish Haul Creek Park
- Date: Saturday, November 7th at 9:00am
- Leader: Robert Rommel, President, author, and photographer.
- Additional information: Water-proof boots, bug spray, sunscreen are recommended.
- To Sign up Contact: Cindy Groff at 843-682-3840 or smilininsc@yahoo.com.
- Free for Audubon members, \$5 per person for non-members.
- ~Smiles, Cindy

HHI Audubon

Board of Directors:

President

Robert Rommel 734-274-1796

Vice President

Jack Greenshields 715-0340

Treasurer

Pauline Jones 715-9405

Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary

Marianne Currie 681-8525

Members-at-Large

Susan Murphy 686-3733

Christmas Bird Count Liaison

Joan Wilson 837-2874

Ecobon Editor

Immediate Past President

Rick Riebesell 681-6424

Emeritus

Barry Lowes

Standing Committee Chairs:

Audubon Newhall Preserve

Jack Greenshields 715-0340

Bob Clemens 689-2903

Bird Walks/Field Trips

Cindy & Kenn Groff 682-3840

Christmas Bird Count Liaison

Susan Murphy 686-3733

Conservation

Jack Greenshields 715-0340

Education

Grant Greider 404-313-8208

Membership

Carol Clemens 689-2903

Fran Baer 686-6348

Programs

Kathy Greider 404-313-8208

Dorie Cubie 843-991-1054

Publicity

Natalie Hefter 304-9789

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.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Robert Rommel*

Vacationing for the Birds

Travel is one of those luxuries that nearly everyone enjoys. Whether you have the opportunity to construct a whole trip centered on birds or just can take a couple of hours out of a family or work-related trip, I highly encourage you to spend some time outside in nature. To get the most out of it you'll need to do some planning beforehand. International travel is full of exciting possibilities, challenges, and of course breathtaking birds but this discussion will focus on domestic travel.

The first question to answer is where you will go. If the primary purpose of your trip is family, work, or a non-nature reason this will be probably already be decided for you. If not, I encourage you to look for areas that have a diverse variety of habitats. Freshwater, saltwater, forests, grasslands, deserts, and mountains all attract quite different birds and provide different landscapes to please the eyes. Locations that offer two or more of these habitats tend to yield the best trips. If you're looking for locations that are good at any time of year, the Tampa Bay area, Texas' Rio Grande Valley, New Jersey's Cape May, Cape Hatteras, southeast Arizona, the California coast from Morro Bay to Monterrey, and Vancouver Island in British Columbia are all fantastic destinations.

The second and perhaps more critical question is where to go when you get there. Spending some time to research this before you go can be the difference between a lackluster trip and a trip of a lifetime. For starters, I recommend that you do NOT try to chase rare birds on most trips. If you're away from home, the regional specialties of the area will already be novel. There is a saying that "a rare bird in one place is a common bird elsewhere". Instead focus on the destinations that will be most productive and have the greatest diversity. Quite often the best places to see the common birds are also the places where the rare birds show up.

Protected lands are the first places to consider. See if there are any national parks, national wildlife refuges, or state parks in the area. Don't dismiss small, local parks as these can often be hidden gems. Check the local Audubon Society (www.audubon.org/audubon-near-you); they often have guides of local hotspots or else have lists of local trips where their members frequent. eBird is one of my favorite trip research tools. When you explore hotspots (ebird.org/ebird/hotspots) you are given a map of all the areas where contributors have recorded counts. I encourage you to not only pay attention to which hotspots have the most species but also which have the most counts as these are the areas which local birders find the best. Combining all of these approaches should give you a good list of sites that you can visit and a rough idea of what species you are likely to encounter.

Whether you are able to plan a trip focused on birds, will have a few hours that you can spend watching birds on an upcoming, or will be staying in the Lowcountry, I highly encourage you to get out and enjoy some birds over the holiday months!

Robert

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Our birding month has been excellent including a great Fall migration. Many of our winter songbirds and shorebirds have arrived. Our very successful warbler migration is at its end.



Lark Sparrow

Twenty- seven species of warblers have been reported so far this Fall including these rare new migrants during the month: Wilsons, Canada, Black-throated Green, Cape May, Hooded, Bay-breasted and Blackpoll Warblers. Also nineteen other migrants have been reported including Gray-cheeked Thrush, Black Tern, Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Bobolink this month.

Rare species reported this month in addition to those above were: Lark Sparrow, King Rail and Pectoral Sandpiper at Hutchinson Island, Magnificent Frigatebird, Black-headed Gull, Black and Common Terns, Solitary Sandpiper and Gray Kingbird at Tybee Island, Clay-colored Sparrow and Common Ground Dove at the Savannah Spoils Site and Roseate Spoonbills at several sites.

Many uncommon species were reported including: American Woodcock, Saltmarsh and Seaside Sparrows, Loggerhead Shrike, Piping and Wilson's Plovers, Caspian Tern, Eurasian-collared Dove, Baltimore Oriole, American White Pelican, Mottled Duck, Peregrine Falcon, Wood Thrush, Magnolia, Prairie, Orange-crowned and Yellow Warblers, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, American Kestrel, Merlin, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Glossy Ibis, Greater and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Swainson's Thrush, Indigo Bunting and House Wren.



Black Throated Blue Warbler
Laura C. Gooch

Other «good finds» reported included: Sora, Marbled Godwit, Black-throated Blue and Prothonotary Warblers, several Bald Eagles and many American Redstarts, Palm Warblers, Common Yellowthroats and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

Many thanks to all reporting their sightings:

Kathy/Grant Greider, Nan Lloyd, Diana Churchill, Carol Clemens, Chris Marsh, Fran/Danny Baer, Susan Taylor, Cindy/Ken Groff, Joanne McMemamin, Jane/Abie Hester, Chris Marsh, Mark Hymer, Dorothy Mosior, Doreen Cubie, Steve Calver, Russ Wigh, Dick Phillips, Annette Hausman, Mary Ann Lueckel, Mary Alice Cruise and a number of visitors.



Peregrine Falcon

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. Please state your full name, the bird species sighted, date and location of your sighting and other pertinent information about your sighting.

It's great time of year to bird and enjoy our wonderful Fall with all our arriving winter birds in HHI area ... and to find those «hot spots» to bird for our annual Christmas Bird Count in December!

Bird Quiz

Here is another site offers all types of bird quizzes. These quizzes, by David Sibley of the Sibley Bird Guides, will challenge even the best birder. He offers quizzes to help you hone your skills on estimating the number of birds in a flock. Another quiz on backyard birds shows you only a portion of a bird and lets you pick from four choices the best ID. This is a good tool to help you focus on key parts of a bird. Other quizzes show just beaks, "butts" of dabbling ducks, and wings. Others teach you the specific parts of a bird's anatomy. Pick a quiz and give it a try! You will learn a lot in the process.

<http://www.sibleyguides.com/quizzes/>

submitted by Carol Clemens

Dear Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Friends,

After a fabulous summer, fall has arrived - and the Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle nesting season is over.

The nest markings are gone.....

the hatchlings are swimming way out in the distant seas.....

but what an amazing year this has been! Here is a summary:

- * 325 Sea Turtle Nests were identified on Hilton Head Island
 - 316 on the ocean and 3 on Dolphin Head Point and 6 on Mitchelville Beach.
 - This is 2.5 times more than last season – hooray!

- * 34.4 % of the nests had to be relocated to higher, safer ground.
(That is 112 nests that were moved –
that is a LOT of work by our turtle team!)

- * There were 191 false crawls

- * Our hatch success was 83.2 %. (Last year was 84.7 %.)

- * We lost 16 nests to storms, beach erosion, storm surges, blood moons, off shore hurricanes, etc, etc. (Last year, we only lost 1.....)

- * The DNA analysis is not complete yet (only about ¾ is done so far), but we already know that we had at least 94 different females who nested on the island.

- The average number of nests laid by each mother was 2.90

- At least one mother laid 6 nests (wow – busy mama!)

- Only 5 turtles laid only one nest.



- * Most sea turtles nesting on Hilton Head Island this year were loggerhead turtles. This year, we had 2 false crawls by green turtles, one false crawl by a leatherback turtle – and one nest actual laid nest by a leatherback. (It was not successful but since it was fertilized, we were able to see the beautiful baby leatherback hatchlings.)

- * Lights on the beach continue to be a problem – we need help from all of you to spread the word about protecting the sea turtles by turning out beach front lights.

A final word of thanks to our wonderful Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project Team, led by Amber Kuehn! These devoted early risers are truly making a difference in saving the endangered Sea Turtles!

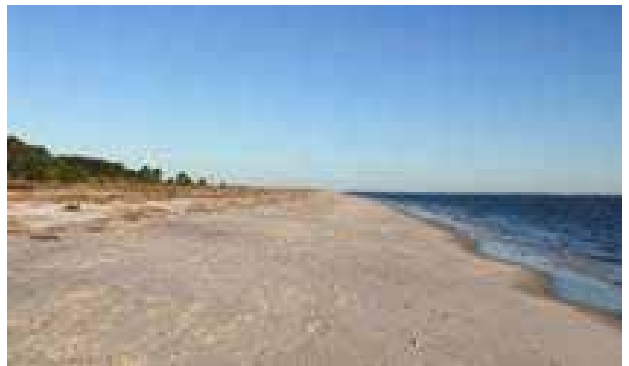
And so, it ends for this year – sincere thanks to each one of you for your great support of the sea turtles. This year, our nest adoptions came from 41 different states, Canada and New Zealand!!! Your enthusiasm and interest inspires us all. In the spring, I will be sending you an email with an update and adoption application to prepare you for the 2016 season.

Until then, keep in touch and take good care -

Andrea



Andrea B. Siebold
Sea Turtle Nest Adoption Coordinator
Hilton Head Island Sea Turtle Protection Project
Coastal Discovery Museum



Membership Report for November 2015

We are happy to have several new members who have joined our group during the last month. Please introduce yourself and make these members feel at home at the next meeting!

Fred and J.C. Compton
Jimmy Kuehler
Frank Martin
Cherry Underwood



Current membership stands at approximately 224. Remember, you will receive an email the quarter your dues should be renewed. Membership runs for one calendar year from when we process your membership form. Questions? Contact one of your membership chairs
Carol Clemens clemens318@roadrunner.com
Fran Baer seatwo@roadrunner.com

Island Packet Lowcountry Birding update:

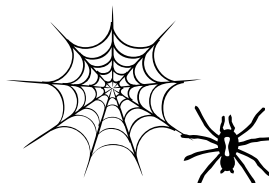
You may recall that the Island Packet prepared an online birding guide for the area. If you saved the original link to the information, please be aware that the link has changed. You can get to it at <http://media.islandpacket.com/static/news/birding.html> or the shortcut <http://bit.ly/LowcountryBirding>. If you are new and never saw this information, you might want to take a look.



HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA

If you have have a young child or grandchild, here is a nature-related suggestion. Charley Harper Memory Game is a colorful and captivating memory game featuring the beautiful illustrations of American artist Charley Harper.

This memory game has 36 matching pairs of square cards featuring many delightful illustrations by Charley Harper. Young children can play an easier version using fewer matching pairs, and older children and adults can play a more challenging version using all 72 pieces. Packaged in a recycled, natural kraft-colored box. #694 \$15.95.



An interesting website.....The Infinite Spider

I recently discovered this interesting website....but don't let the name fool you! It covers a lot more than just spiders. This blog has very interesting short articles on many things in nature. Those of special interest to birders include sections on bird ID, general birding, birds of prey, and feather ID. The link below takes you to the general birding area of the website. On the right hand column on the site, you will find links to numerous items that may be of interest to you. Check it out!

<http://infinitespider.com/category/birding/>

submitted by Carol Clemens

NOTES FROM THE NEWHALL PRESERVE and Conservation Committee

by Jack Greenshields

Notes from the Newhall Preserve

The summer heat and heavy precipitation has caused much plant growth at the Preserve and the water level of the pond is the highest seen in many years. Even the Pocasin has standing water which also is rare. We will be scheduling several organized work days this Fall and Winter to cut back the unwanted vegetation and clean out the dead trees. I will send an e-mail to previous volunteers, but if you are new to the organization and would like to help, please send me a note at jackg308@gmail.com or 651-491-1851.

Our Thursday 10am guided walks will continue through November and then restart in March through May. There are several private organization guided walks scheduled and if you know of a group that might be interested, please contact me.

The bicycle/pedestrian crossing from the far side of Palmetto Bay Road to the entrance of the Newhall Preserve is almost complete. We now need to redouble our efforts for the replacement of the front gate to allow safer entry and exit by two vehicles.

Notes from The Conservation Committee

The surveys of the Burkes/Collier area continue with much data having been collected. This will be tabulated and presented to the Town.

We continue to keep a watch on the retention pond behind Kroger and have met with Blanchard and Calhoun regarding some changes in protective vegetation and the design and installation of a viewing platform. The educational panels about the birds of the lagoon as designed by Robert Rommell will be included in the signage package to be submitted shortly. Construction of Site East #1 (136 units and Site East #2 (104 units) is expected to begin in February which is when the lagoon is open to birds as they are at their nesting areas.

The Town will provide Audubon with the tree plans for Pineland Station and we will comment as appropriate. The Hilton Head Beach Renourishment Project will be completed during the first half of 2016. The project sequence would have work occurring on the southern areas of the island, South Beach, South Forest Beach, North Forest Beach and the southern areas of Palmetto Dunes generally between mid-February and mid-April. Work along the northern areas of the project, Singleton Beach, northern Palmetto Dunes, Port Royal Plantation and Fish Haul/Spa would be constructed generally between mid-April and mid-June. Our biggest concern is project management at the Fish Haul/Spa site and what will be done with Mitchellville Beach.

Thanks to all our Conservation Team members who have attended Town Council ,Planning, Design and other Town meetings. The Audubon presence is certainly recognized.

If someone has a question or comment, please contact me at jackg308@gmail.com or 651-491-1851

.....

FOUR FOODS TO ATTRACT NUTHATCHES TO YOUR YARD

SUET - a suet block in a cage-like feeder is sure to lure in nuthatches in the winter months when conifer seeds are sometimes scarce.

SUNFLOWER SEEDS - any form of sunflower seeds will attract desirable birds, but when it comes to nut hatches, serving up black oil sunflower seeds is a slam dunk. Because “bully” birds also seek out black oil seeds, a tube feeder with small perches is best.

PEANUTS - If you don’t have a peanut feeder yet, get one for the upcoming ‘cold’ season.

LIVE MEALWORMS - More species than just bluebirds enjoy a mealworm snack. A large portion of the nut-hatch diet is insects, and they don’t require anything fancy, just toss some mealworms in a shallow tray or platform feeder and cross your fingers.

(from BirdsandBloom)

Christmas Bird Count Dates



Planning for the 2015 Christmas Bird Count!

The Count is Monday, December 14, for the Hilton Head area. We spread out across Hilton Head and Daufuskie Islands, parts of Bluffton and our waterways to identify species and count each bird we see in our 15-mile diameter circle. (Last year there were 2,462 count circles in the Western Hemisphere!)

Captains of our 18 areas are putting their teams together. We always welcome more participants, so if you have interest in being a part of this international effort, please e-mail me and I will have a Captain contact you! You do not have to be an accomplished birder. Start out as the recorder or as the photographer in a more experienced group! It is a fun day, even if sometimes the weather does not cooperate. Enjoy exploring our beautiful habitat and sharing the wonder of finding our feathered friends with your neighbors and fellow birding enthusiasts. You can also participate from the comfort of home by being one of our Feeder Watchers.

For more information and forms, visit the website at: <http://www.hiltonheadaudubon.org/audubon-christmas-bird-count>

Note for our Sun City-Okatie members: The count for the Sun City-Okatie circle is Saturday, December 19. If you are interested in participating there, please contact Jim Cubie, 843-991-1059 or jimcubie@gmail.com.

Our annual Christmas Bird Count meeting is on Wednesday, December 9 at First Presbyterian Church, 540 William Hilton Parkway.

We'll gather in Fellowship Hall for refreshments at 7:00 pm. The presentation, "Christmas Birds Countdown," by Robert Rommel, begins at 7:30 pm. Coffee will be provided, and we invite our generous members to bring cookies, cakes and other goodies! This meeting is free and open to the public. Bring your friends!

Susan Murphy
CBC Coordinator, Hilton Head
HHICBC@gmail.com
(843) 686-3733



HOW THE NUTHATCH GOT ITS NAME

The nuthatch's family name, Sittidae, comes from the Greek for "a climbing bird" and was used by Aristotle. The common name, nuthatch, has nothing to do with hatching nuts (or eggs) but comes from the Anglo-Saxon *hnuta*, "a nut" and the Old English *hakken*, meaning to "break or cleave". These little birds will wedge a nut into a crevice to hold it while they pound it open.

Nuthatches have the vocal equipment to sing well but don't really use it. They spend most of their lives scurrying up and down trees for insects or wedging nuts into crevices, often for future use, and don't seem to have time to perch and sing. It seems somehow appropriate that when they do finally stop to sleep they roost head downward, as if too exhausted to perch right side up.

(from "100 Birds and How They Got Their Names" by Diana Wells)



Find us on
facebook



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



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
- 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

I wish to make an extra donation of _____(amount)

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

Please mail to: P.O. Box 6185 – Hilton Head Island, SC - 29938 (Rev. 2/2015)



Audubon

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

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

Title: Ecobon
Issue Date: November 2015
Frequency: Monthly Sept.-May
Organization: Hilton Head Island Audubon Society
P.O. Box 6185
Hilton Head, South Carolina 29938
Issue #: 358

NOVEMBER ~ DECEMBER 2015 Calendar

Birding 101 Classes - Saturdays 11/7 and 11/14
9:30 AM - Coastal Discovery Museum

NOVEMBER

- Thurs. Nov. 5 Board Meeting at CCHH..... 10:00 am
- Thurs. Nov. 7 Field Trip at Fish Haul Creek Park 9:00 am
- Thurs. Nov. 12 Monthly Meeting 3:00 pm
at Honey Horn

DECEMBER

- Thurs. Dec. 3 Board Meeting at CCHH..... 10:00 am
- Weds. Dec. 9 Monthly Meeting & Social Hour 7:00 pm
at First Presbyterian Church
Bird Identification for Christmas Bird Count
- Mon. Dec. 14 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT All Day

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.