

Whistler

The Audubon Society of Forsyth County Newsletter

August/September 2009

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UPCOMING EVENTS


- August 8 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Civitan Park 8:00 am (Gene Schepker, leader)
- August 13 Board Meeting, Arbor Acres 7:00 pm
- August 15 **Day Trip, Boone's Cave (see below)**
- September 1 Board Meeting, Arbor Acres 7:00 pm
- September 12 Second Saturday Birdwalk, Bethabara Greenway Miller Park 8:00 am (Susan Jones, leader)
- September 15 Swift Watch – TBA, Ron Morris
- September 13 Hawk Watch begins, Pilot Mountain – Phil Dickinson
- September 19 Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch Education Day – Phil Dickinson
- September 22 **Chapter Picnic/Meeting – 6 pm potluck, 7:30 pm meeting, Bethabara Visitor Center**


**OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS HAVE BEEN MOVED TO BETHABARA PARK
(see below for details)**



BOONE'S CAVE DAY TRIP

 On Saturday August 15, join us for a field trip to Davidson County to visit Boone's Cave Park and the York Canoe Access on the Yadkin River. Target birds include warblers, waders and shorebirds.

 We will carpool from Thruway Plaza behind the Wachovia Bank at 7:30 a.m. Bring a hat, bug repellent, binoculars, water and a picnic lunch. We will return early in the afternoon. For more information, contact Phil Dickinson, 659-2464, pdickins@triad.rr.com.

 Audubon Society will be leading a number of day trips in the coming year (see the calendar on pages 4-5 for more details).



CHAT

Fall Migration and YOU!

What? Are we all going to Central America? Feed on tasty morsels this winter at Chan Chich Lodge in Belize? "Side order of arachnia with that nectar, ma'am?" No, but we are all going to be moving south a bit come September. About four miles south.

After much discussion the Board of the Audubon Society of Forsyth County as decided to move our chapter meetings from SciWorks to the Visitor Center at the Historic Bethabara Park. SciWorks has been most generous in giving us meeting space for the last several years. But a combination of factors have made the move to Bethabara seem a very good choice for our chapter.

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CONSERVATION CORNER

We will be starting off the new 2009 – 2010 year on Tuesday, September 22 at 6:00 pm with a pot luck supper in the picnic area adjacent to the Visitor Center parking lot. so we don't all bring Three Bean Salad!) and a chance for all of us to get together maybe even without binoculars and a check list. We will then adjourn to the Visitor Center for our program. Audubon will furnish the beverages and paper products (post-consumer!) and all of us will bring something to share. There will be entertainment, good food (be creative !

Directions to Historic Bethabara Park are quite easy. You can Google directions or, if you are a Luddite like me, simply follow these directions: From the intersection of Reynolda Road and Polo Road head west on Reynolda Road for .6 of a mile. At the stoplight at the intersection of Reynolda Road and Old Town Drive (McDonald's on the left, Bank of America on the right) turn right on to Old Town Drive. Go about a mile (there will be one stop sign) and turn left into the parking lot at the Visitor Center.

From the intersection of Silas Creek Parkway and Bethabara Road turn left onto Bethabara Road and go .7 of a mile. Turn right into the parking lot at the Visitor Center.

Susan Jones

Released on July 15 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the report on birdwatching shows that an astounding one of out of every five Americans watches birds. It reveals that birdwatchers contributed \$36 billion to the U.S. economy in 2006 alone, the most recent year for which economic data are available. Birdwatching is often described as the second-fastest growing hobby in the United States after gardening.

The report - Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis (http://library.fws.gov/Pubs/birding_natsurvey06.pdf) shows that total participation in birdwatching is strong at 48 million, remaining at a steady 20 percent of the U.S. population since 1996. Participation rates vary, but are generally greater in the northern half of the country. The five states with the greatest birding participation rates are Montana (40 percent), Maine (39 percent), Vermont (38 percent), Minnesota (33 percent) and Iowa (33 percent). The report identifies who birders are, where they live, how avid they are, and what kinds of birds they watch. In addition to demographic information, this report also provides an estimate of how much birders spend on their hobby.

The report is an addendum to the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/NationalSurvey/2006_Survey.htm). The 2006 survey is the eleventh in a series of surveys conducted about every 5 years. The survey, according to USFWS, "helps quantify how enjoyment of the outdoors and wildlife contributes to society and promotes a healthy economy."

"To conserve and restore natural ecosystems -- focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and North Carolina's biological diversity."

This is the mission statement that was framed years ago for Audubon Society of Forsyth County. We all enjoy watching the birds, but there also are many things we can do to protect habitat so that birds and other wildlife continue to thrive.

On July 14, several members of Forsyth Audubon met at the Bethabara wetland to take on invasive non-native lotus plants that are spreading across one of our favorite birding areas. We paddled out in canoes and kayaks to begin cutting out non-native invasive lotus plants that are spreading across this bird sanctuary. The group finished the morning wet and dirty, but determined to return to continue the effort. Thanks to Dave Pounds of Sierra Club and Linda Moore for bringing their kayaks and taking part in the project.

Sierra is just one local group with which Forsyth Audubon can partner to make a real difference in our local wildlife habitats. As I write this in mid-July, our Board also is working with Trout Unlimited to plan clean-up efforts for Bethabara's section of Mill Creek, which flows behind the wetland.

On a nationwide basis, Audubon's Together Green Community Grants Program is sponsoring local collaborative efforts to protect and preserve habitat. Here is just a sample of what some chapters are doing:

South Florida Audubon contributed over 1300 volunteer hours removing exotic species and planting native plants.

Greater Ozarks Audubon conducted stream cleanups and trailblazing activities.

Wabash Valley Audubon installed nest boxes and removed exotic honeysuckle.

Wouldn't it be great to get a grant for Forsyth County? The next application cycle comes up in May 2010.

Coastal Conservation

Your Birdathon contributions also support conservation of bird habitat. Our May Birdathon raised \$1400. Half of that supports efforts at North Carolina coastal sanctuaries. The remaining \$700 stays home to help us with local activities. Thanks so much for your participation.

Phil Dickinson, Conservation Chair

YOUNG NATURALISTS

Bluebirds were the topic of conversation at the Reynolda Gardens Young Naturalists camp this year. On two days in June, Terri Maness, David Shuford and Phil Dickinson talked with the campers about bluebirds and took them out to the new meadow where the birds have been nesting.

Terri, who is Adjunct Assistant Professor of Biology at Wake Forests, discussed a study her college students conducted this spring about the nesting preferences of bluebirds. For example, the campers learned that the healthiest birds begin nesting sooner, and that they prefer sites clear of brushy ground cover under the box. On both days, the kids also got to see a Red-tailed Hawk looking for food in the meadow and to learn about other species that they might see there.

The Young Naturalists program is run by Camilla Wilcox, Education Director at Reynolda Gardens, and Audubon has supported the activity for a number of years. The students vary in age from six through eleven.

THE HAWKS ARE COMING!

The annual fall hawk watching spectacle soon will be here. Each year hundreds of thousands of Broad-winged Hawks and other raptors stream south to their winter homes in Central or South America. A few thousand come by nearby hawk-watching sites like Pilot Mountain and Mahogany Rock. Groups, or kettles, of migrating Broad-wingeds can range from less than 10 to several hundred

We will begin our Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch the weekend of September 12-13, with public education days at Little Pinnacle on September 19-20. Come join us in counting hawks. We welcome everyone from experienced raptor watchers to novice birders. We will be seeking volunteers soon. The data we collect goes to a national database at www.hawkcount.org. You can find information about the Pilot Mountain watch at that site and at <http://www.forsythaudubon.org/HawkWatch/HawkWatch.html>.

Phil Dickinson



Don Adamick

WARBLER HUNTING IN VIRGINIA

A group of 17 Forsyth Audubon birders went hunting for warblers in the highlands of Virginia from May 29 to May 31, 2009 and were successful. Meeting at the Peaks of Otter Visitor Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia, the group traveled north and west along Warbler Road towards the James River. The road is aptly named and many warblers were spotted as well as a Ruffed Grouse family, nesting Ovenbirds, and a nesting Wood Thrush. After a picnic lunch along the North Creek, the group headed out to Hidden Valley via the scenic Goshen Pass.

Hidden Valley was a real jewel and served up almost twenty more species despite birding in the afternoon. Many went back on the route home to add more species to the list. The first day ended at Monterey where all gathered for a social hour to discuss the day's activities.

The highlight of the second day was a trip to Paddy's Knob along the West Virginia border. Our target bird was the Mourning Warbler and we were not disappointed. In the afternoon the birders split up in smaller groups and checked out the many other birding locales in the Highland County area. The day concluded with a "count dinner" at the Highland Inn; 105 species were identified over the course of the three day trip. All had a great time and the highlands will be visited again soon.

Don Adamick

ASFC
Calendar Dates 2009/2010

August

- August 8 Second Saturday Birdwalk– 8 am, Civitan Park, Gene Schepker
- August 13 Extra Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- August 15 Day Trip - Boone’s Cave, Phil Dickinson

September

- September 1 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- September 12 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Bethabara Greenway, Susan Jones
- September 13 Hawk Watch begins, Pilot Mountain – Phil Dickinson
- September 15 Swift Watch – TBA, Ron Morris
- September 19 Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch Education Day – Phil Dickinson
- September 22 Chapter Picnic/Meeting – 6 pm potluck, 7:30 pm meeting, Bethabara Visitor Center

October

- October 3 The Big Sweep – 9 am, Miller Park, Pam Wooten
- October 6 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- October 10 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Reynolda Gardens, TBA
- October 11 The Big Sit – early, Reynolda Gardens, Susan Jones
- October 17 Day Trip –Mahogany Rock, John Haire
- October 27 Chapter Meeting – 7:00 pm, Bethabara Visitor Center

November

- November 1 Daylight Saving Time ends
- November 3 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- November 14 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 9 am, Muddy Creek, Phil Dickinson
- November 24 Chapter Meeting – 7:00 pm, Bethabara Visitor Center
Katherine Thorington: Historic Bethabara Park: Results of the Breeding Bird Survey

December

- December 1 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- December 12 Second Saturday – 9 am, Civitan Park, Kim Brand
- December 15 Holiday Get Together – TBA
- December 19 Hanging Rock CBC

January

- January 2 ASFC CBC
- January 5 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- January 9 Second Saturday – 9 am, Washington Park, Jeremy Reiskind
- January 15-18 Winter Trip – Chincoteague and Assateague – Don Adamick
- January 23 Miller Park Clean Up – 9 am, Pam Wooten
- January 26 Chapter Meeting – 7:00 pm, Bethabara Visitor Center
Mark Simpson: "The joy of discovery: naturalists of the southern Blue Ridge Mountains"

February

- February 2 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- February 6 Audubon North Carolina Chapter Day – NC Zoo
- February 13 Second Saturday – 9 am, Salem Lake, Susan Jones
- February 20 Day Trip – Greensboro Lakes
- February 23 Chapter Meeting – 7:00 pm, Bethabara Visitor Center

March

- March 2 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
- March 13 Second Saturday Birdwalk– 9 am, Archie Elledge, John Haire
- March 14 Daylight Saving Time begins
- March 30 Chapter Meeting – 7:00 pm, Bethabara Visitor Center
Dennis Burnette, “Butterfly Identification for Birders”

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April

- April 4 Easter Sunday
April 6 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
April 10 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Tan glewood, Gardner Gidley
April 17 Day Trip – Weymouth Woods/Sandhills Game Lands, John Haire and Royce Hough
April 24 Miller Park Clean up – 9 am, Pam Wooten
Earth Day (tentative)
April 27 Chapter Meeting – 7:00 pm, Bethabara Visitor Center

May

- May 1 CBC Annual Meeting in W-S
May 2 Mothers' Day
May 4 Board Meeting – 7:00 pm, Arbor Acres Clubhouse
May 8 ASFC SBC
May 15 IBA New River
Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Reynolda Gardens, Bill Gifford
May 21-23 State Meeting, Highlands, NC
May 25 Chapter Picnic/Meeting – 6:00 pm pot luck, 7:30 pm, meeting, Bethabara Visitor Center
May 31 Memorial Day

June

- June 4-6 Spring Trip – Blue Ridge Parkway (some altitude) – Don Adamick
June 12 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Civitan, TBA
June 19 Board Retreat

July

- July 10 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Ann and Chester Robertson, Bert Hollifield
July 17 Day Trip – Watauga County/BRP, Ron Morris

August

- Sat., Aug. 14 Second Saturday Birdwalk – 8 am, Archie Elledge, Gene Schepker

BIRDS AND BOOKS

In *Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson* (Guilford, CT: The Lyons Press, 2008), Elizabeth Rosenthal provides a detailed and enormously readable account of the life and contributions of Roger Tory Peterson, who transformed the world of birdwatching and natural history more broadly beginning with the publication of his first field guide in 1934. As E.O. Wilson once wrote, “The beginning of wisdom, as the Chinese say, is calling things by their right names.”

The first three parts of the book provide a thorough consideration of Peterson's life, beginning with his modest working class origins in Jamestown, New York and the fascination with birds he evinced from childhood. His field guides and other publications, along with his extensive educational work with Audubon made him “the birds' ambassador to America” by the late 1930s. After wartime service with the army, Peterson struck out on his own, establishing a prodigious record of writings, illustrations, and photographs. In the spring of 1953 he and the British naturalist James Fisher set off on a hundred day North American trek that would result in the publication of *Wild America*, a book that would inspire many later naturalists, including Kenn Kaufman (“a walking, talking Peterson apostle”) and Scott Weidensaul (who recreated Peterson and Fisher's trip, although he took nine months rather than one hundred days to complete it).

Rosenthal also provides details of Peterson's personal life, including his three marriages and often difficult relationship with his children, although this story is clearly secondary to the focus on his professional work, a reflection of the reality of Peterson's life; he was a man who appeared to have been wholly absorbed in his work, and was often both physically and emotionally. Some who knew Peterson described him as a monomaniac, obsessed with birds to the exclusion of all else, others praise him for his concentration and focus, while still others maintain he was a far more multifaceted man (although natural history was clearly defining).

Much of the second half of the work focuses on Peterson's contributions to the study of birds and natural history, as well as international conservation efforts, including the World Wildlife Fund. Throughout, Rosenthal places Peterson's life and activities in the context of the history of ornithology and conservation, demonstrating how Peterson both shaped events and was shaped by them.

Trained as an attorney, Rosenthal has previously written a biography of Elton John, a far different subject than Roger Tory Peterson. Yet, she brings considerable erudition and a fine writing style to this work, which is based upon dozens of interviews with Peterson's family, friends and followers. For more information on this book, see www.petersonbird.com.

Susan Rupp

Our Mission

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems—focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and North Carolina’s biological diversity

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Visit us on the web at www.forsythaudubon.org

The Audubon Society of Forsyth County

2009-2010 CHAPTER BOARD

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For membership information, please contact Lois Schneider at 768-6645. If you don't wish to join the National Audubon Society, but would like to join the local chapter, send \$15.00 (make your check payable to ASFC) to: Audubon Society of Forsyth County, P.O. Box 15111, Winston-Salem, NC 27113. Please include your name, email, address and zip code.

Enjoy the final weeks of summer!



Doug Demarest