

New Hope Audubon Society Newsletter



Volume 31, Number 4: September-October 2005

Did You Know? by Tom Driscoll

The New Hope Audubon Society is not only about birds! Although John James Audubon primarily studied and drew birds (and named many of our birds), the focus of the National Audubon Society, including the New Hope Audubon Society chapter, has expanded to include advocacy for all flora and fauna. This advocacy includes environmental advocacy. Because advocacy for flora and fauna includes recognizing that flora and fauna need unpolluted habitat, we have become spokespersons for habitat and environmental protection.

The New Hope Audubon Society has three on-going programs to monitor and clean up the environment. One, we have stream watch lead by John Kent. He and his crew monitor several sections of the New Hope Creek in Durham and Orange Counties. They have tested the creek for *e. coli* and several other contaminants for many years. They also monitor the invertebrate life in the creek. The creek fauna are good indicators of the health of a creek. John is an expert on creek invertebrates!

We also clean up Stagecoach Road (it intersects with Highway 751) in Durham County four times each year. Phil Johnson leads a crew that picks up all the trash along each side of the road. We also try to recycle all the recyclables. It is gratifying when drivers stop to tell us how appreciative they are for our effort. I guess Phil is now a "trash" expert!

We also clean up the parking lot and the trail to the Eagle Platform which is located just off Highway 751, just north of Highway 64. Judy Murray leads a group that cleans up this area and keeps the kiosk supplied with informational pamphlets. Often, Bald Eagles and Ospreys can be seen from the Eagle Platform.

Finally, we are environmental advocates for Chatham, Durham, and Orange Counties (the area we serve) and the State of North Carolina. In the past three years, we have testified at hearings for highway work in order to ensure flora and fauna and the environment are considered. We have also contacted state and federal legislators about our concerns with several projects, especially the Out-lying Landing Field in Washington County.

So, when you think of the New Hope Audubon Society, please think of birds, but remember all the other things we stand for, as well! If you want to get involved in any of our activities or you think there are activities that we should be doing, then please let us know. Contact us at a membership meeting or through the contact information elsewhere in this newsletter! We look forward to seeing and working with you to make Chatham, Durham, and Orange Counties (and North Carolina) a better place to live and for flora and fauna to live.

ANNUAL BIRD SEED SALE

It's that time of year again. The Bird Seed Sale order form enclosed in this newsletter. We hope that you will take a few minutes to fill out the form and order your year's supply of bird seed. And, if you are a coffee drinker or have friends who enjoy a great cup of coffee, we are offering shade grown coffees again this year. Be sure to send in your order before October 15th and include your check with the order. If you need your bird seed delivered to your home, please note that on the order form.

To the right is a notice to cut out and post on your refrigerator to remind you to pick up your birdseed on October 29th at the Wild Bird Center in Eastgate Shopping Center. Any questions, please call Judy Murray at 942-2985.

Don't Forget!!!

Pick Up your New Hope Audubon Society BIRD SEED and COFFEE

**SATURDAY, October 29, 2005
Between 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
WILD BIRD CENTER
EASTGATE SHOPPING CENTER
Chapel Hill**

A Triangle Naturalist's Almanac

Patrick Coin

Wasp not, fly yes! The butterfly-watcher may be rather fearful of the numerous bees and wasps that buzz noisily around summer and fall flowers in our area. One of the most impressive is an inch-long insect patterned in yellow and brown. Its bold manner, bright colors, and loud buzz in flight cause most to give it wide berth, but they've been *had*.



This is not a wasp at all, but a fly, *Milesia virginensis*. This fly is believed to mimic the ill-tempered Southern Yellowjacket, *Vespula squamosa*, and so the species is sometimes called the Yellowjacket Hoverfly. It is a member of the family *Syrphidae*, of the order diptera, or true flies. Common names for *Syrphidae* include "hoverflies" and "flower flies". They often have bright colors and are fond of sipping nectar. Many resemble bees and wasps (hymenoptera), but none bite or sting. This *Batesian mimicry* no doubt protects them from predators, such as birds. Telling syrphids from hymenoptera can be tricky for humans as well. Look for large compound "fly eyes" on syrphids. Hymenoptera usually have smaller, less faceted eyes. Of course hymenoptera have four wings, and syrphids, being diptera, have two, but this can be tricky to see when the wings are folded at rest. Look for the vestigial hind wings, or halteres, of diptera. These look like little clubs held close to the body.

The origin of the genus name *Milesia* is obscure. It perhaps refers to *The Fable of Milesia* from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. (Mileto was an ancient city in Asia Minor, and *Milesia* refers to a female inhabitant of that city.) The 18th and 19th century entomologists who named most of our common insects were schooled in the classics, and there are many such references in scientific names. This is a small genus, with but two species in eastern North America.

Look for *Milesia* in fields and along roadsides where there are abundant wildflowers. The larvae of *Milesia* are said to live in cavities in standing trees, so check patches of wildflowers near more mature deciduous forests. The fly occurs from May into September in our area.

For more information on *Milesia*, see: Taber, *Insects of the Texas Lost Pines*; Lutz, *Fieldbook of Insects*; bugguide.net.

Wildathon 2005

Tom Driscoll

The Wildathon was a big success this year — raising over \$3,400! As you know, the Wildathon is our spring fund event where fund raisers go out to look for different species of flora and fauna (most often birds) and ask donors to contribute based on the number of species seen and identified. Several groups competed this year — Brian Bockhahn bested his mark

of 107 species of birds seen last year by seeing 108 species this year. Marsha Stephens, Dave Curtin, and Tom Driscoll saw 100 species, three species less than last year. Loren Hintz and Phil Johnson also led teams. Kate Finlayson and Chris Canfield excelled in getting their Pittsboro neighbors to contribute. Kate and Brian won awards for their efforts. Kate, for the most contributors, and Brian, for the most species seen and reported! Great work!

Our donors included Robin Segall, Peter and Gail Westlin, Rob Gluck, Marty and Roy Girolami, William and Frances Hollister, Dianne Byrne, Harriette Frank, Pearson Stewart, Catherine Kramer, Carol Hamilton, Patricia Beyle, Alice Yeaman, Dorian D'Agati, Karen Durovitch, Barbara and Tom Driscoll, Cynthia Fox of the Wild Bird Center, Phil Johnson of P.J. Associates, Rebecca Newton, Jennifer Maher, Marti Kane, Lois Nixon, Earl Creutzburg, Phyllis Zieverink, Martha Grice, Amanda Smith, Brian and Colleen Bockhahn, Judy Murray, Brigitte Hamilton, William and Gloria Moran, Gail Hudson, Nancy and John Cooper, Robin Moran, Bianca Barbone, Loren and Carl Hintz, Steve Fishler, Jeanne Van Gemert, Ellen Johnson, Carol Ann McCormick, Scott Campbell, Elaine and Mark Constable, Cynthia Williams, Harold and Margaret Opitz, Elizabeth Pekarek and Alan McGinagle, Peggy and JD Schalk, Margaret and Tom Scott, Lynn Stephenson, Karen Ladd, David Donlon and Julia Thorp, Diane Ware-Furlow, Juliet Roseberry, Kate Finlayson and Chris Canfield, Melissa and John Laign, Bert Gurganus of Space Builders, Dennis and Dawn Streets, Ken and Debbie Tunnell, Ted Zoller of Outdoor Bird Co., Don and Barb Bockhahn, Sheila Jones, Norman Budnitz, John Sutherland, Steve Berkowitz, and Paul and Georgia Kyle.

NHAS & Local Boy Scouts Install Nesting Boxes for Wood Ducks

Dianne Byrne

One of our recent habitat conservation activities was given a good headline in the June 13, 2005 Chapel Hill Herald. The headline read "Thanks to Project, the Duck Stops Here," a prediction that we hope will prove to be true. The project was the installation of four nesting boxes for wood ducks at the Upper Little Creek waterfowl impoundment off NC 54 near Meadowmont. Our chapter was extremely fortunate to work with 5 dedicated volunteer boy scouts and their fathers. The scouts were from the Viking Patrol of Boy Scout Troop 820 in Chapel Hill. The installation required hard, sweaty work on a hot and humid afternoon in June, but at the end of the four hours, all were feeling very satisfied with their efforts.

Mike Murray, assistant scoutmaster, arrived that day well-prepared with a gas-powered augur for drilling the post holes into the mud. Patrol leader Alan Christopher and fellow scouts Will Murray and Brian Waldrup attached the duck boxes to the 4 x 4's and carried them to the separate locations out in the water and mud of the impoundment. Bill Christopher, Alan's father, positioned the poles after the holes were drilled.

Boone Field Trip Report - June 18, 2005

Mike Swaim

Those few of us from the New Hope Audubon Society that showed up for the June 18 trip up to the Blue Ridge Parkway were treated to a wonderful time, and were chauffeured and guided by Curtis Smalling, the Western Field rep for NC Audubon. Of the ~60ish species encountered, highlights were:

- BOBOLINK
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW
- ACADIAN FLYCATCHER
- LEAST FLYCATCHER (nesting, feeding young!)
- WILLOW FLYCATCHER* (including micro-chicks in a nest 4ft off the ground that all got to see! And a lifer too boot!)
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE (nesting, feeding young!)
- ORCHARD ORIOLE
- CEDAR WAXWINGS (building nests)
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER (framed nicely against some Spiderwort)
- CERULEAN WARBLER
- GOLDEN WINGED WARBLER* (Whoohooo! A lifer!!)
- YELLOW WARBLER (numerous, including many nesting, feeding young!)
- VESPER SPARROW* !! (lifer!)

Curtis led a great trip that included a lengthy stop at a Watauga County Park in Valle Crucis. This proved to be a wonderland of nesting birds, which took on a cartoon Disneyland like quality. At this spot, the sheer number of different species of observable nesting birds, in various stages of tending their young, was like nothing I've seen before. We saw all kinds of nesting birds there, from Am. Robins, to RT Hummingbirds, to Tree Swallows in Blue bird boxes, to teeny, tiny, nesting WILLOW FLYCATCHERS. There were numerous nesting YELLOW WARBLERS, and we got to see young in several stages of development. We got to see a couple BALTIMORE ORIOLE nests that incorporated fishing line as structural elements. The density of nesting birds in this park is

such that in one area, at least half a dozen different species could be seen tending to their nests and young, just by spinning a stationary scope around to different trees, all within about a 30yd circle, and by taking a short walk along the river, one could see many, many different nests.

After soaking in as much as we could at that very interesting little County Park, we went off in search of the elusive GOLDEN WINGED WARBLER. Several stops produced nothing, and I think some of the group morale was starting to wane as the afternoon wore on. Then, on the last stop where Curtis thought they might be likely, he played the tape again, as he'd done at several previous stops. And after a few playbacks, finally, the target bird appeared. He flitted about, and eventually circled the van a couple times. I think all present got good looks at it

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The mud was so squishy and thick that Bill lost both his sandals to the mud before the end of the day. Former New Hope Audubon President, Tom Driscoll, was on hand to help wherever needed, describing wood ducks and the importance of the project in maintaining their habitat. Dianne Byrne, who coordinated the project from the beginning with the boy scouts, Mike Murray, and the NC Wildlife Commission, were also on hand to assist. New Hope Audubon member Cynthia Fox, owner of the Wild Bird Center at Eastgate Shopping Center, donated two of the handsomely-crafted nesting boxes and was on site to observe and offer help.

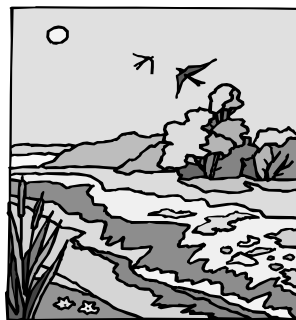
We appreciate the invaluable efforts of the Boy Scouts and their fathers who generously contributed their time and energy. We could not have accomplished this important project without them. We are also grateful for the donation of nesting boxes from Cynthia Fox and 4 x 4 posts from Mike Murray. Our thanks to Isaac Harrold and Christopher Baranski from the NC Wildlife Commission for providing sturdy predator guards as well as helpful advice and technical guidance. We were also pleased that Beth Velliquette and Bernard Thomas from The Herald-Sun joined us, took some good pictures, and gave us nice publicity in the Chapel Hill Herald. Now, we can hope that more ducks will indeed stop here and be around for us to observe on future field trips to the impoundment.

Erwin Trace Park

Judy Murray

When the controversy over the Erwin Trace development (corner of Erwin and Pickett Roads) arose last year, a plea went out to several organizations to help support the effort to stop the development. Funds were needed to purchase the land for a park. New Hope Audubon responded by contributing \$2,500 toward the effort. Since then we have been asked to increase our pledge by extending the \$2,500 for two more years. After much discussion at our planning meeting this summer, we decided to extend our pledge for the next two years.

The Triangle Land Conservancy is one of the main agencies in charge or raising funds for this project. The purchase of this land forms an important part of the New Hope Creek corridor and, hopefully, will some day be a part of the protection of the whole corridor of the creek from its inception to Jordan Lake. As many of you know, development in the Triangle Area has boomed for the past decade without much regard for open space much less the wildlife and the quality of the water for the area. We hope, with this small effort to help save land along New Hope Creek, others will be inspired to come forward and do their part to save more open space for the Triangle Area. Thank you for your contributions to New Hope Audubon by supporting us in our fund raising efforts: Bird Seed Sale, Wildathon, Bluebird Houses and general contributions.



Boone Field Trip Report

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several times. Evidently, this was the same spot where the Wake Audubon group had seen the bird a few weeks earlier.

We ended the day up in "The Gap", not too far from the TN line, looking at VESPER SPARROWS. At first, they were quite

distant, and even views through the scopes were somewhat frustrating. But, eventually, we had one come right down to the fence line, not too far from where we were standing, and most of us got good, relatively close looks at this bird.

Thanks to Curtis Smalling and to Tom Driscoll and Dianne Byrne for setting this up. It was a great time.

New Hope Audubon Membership Meeting Programs

September 2005 through May 2006

Tom Driscoll

As you know, we meet once a month on the first Thursday of the month (unless it falls on a holiday) from September through May. We meet at the Totten Center of the North Carolina Botanical Gardens at 7:00p.m. The center is located on Highway 15-501 at Old Mason Farm Road. Meetings start and refreshments and "visiting" at 7:00 p.m., followed by chapter business around 7:20pm, and the program speaker begins his/her presentation at 7:45 p.m. Meetings end at 9:00 p.m. Below are our exciting programs for the 2005-2006 Audubon "year"!

However, our first meeting of the year is always a pot luck dinner! So, come at 6:30pm and bring a dish to feed 4 or 5. Please bring your own plates and dishes, so we can limit the amount of landfill waste we generate. And, there is not a speaker scheduled for the September meeting. Instead, members bring 10 to 12 slides of the flora and fauna from a trip near or far. We will have a slide projector and a laptop with power point, so you can show slides or digital pictures! If you plan on showing slides or pictures, please contact Tom Driscoll whose contact information is below.

All welcome are attend, Audubon members or not! If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Tom Driscoll, the programs chair, at 932-7966 or btdriscoll@bellsouth.net.

2005-2006 New Hope Audubon Membership Meeting Presentations

DATE	PRESENTATION*	SPEAKER	CONTACT INFO
Sept. 1, 2005 6:30 p.m.	Potluck Dinner/Audubon's Anniversary Movie/Slides	Every and/or Any One	Tom Driscoll
October 6, 2005	South Africa Birds, Mammals, Plants, and Butterflies	Barbara and Tom Driscoll	btdriscoll@bellsouth.net
November 3, 2005	The Many Advantages of Eating Locally Produced, Pasture-raised Meat, Eggs, and Dairy Products	Michael Lanier, NC Cooperative Extension	mlanier@co.orange.nc.us
December 1, 2005	Bird Photography	Rick Albrecht	ralbrecht@nc.rr.com
January 5, 2006	Reptiles and Amphibians in Eastern North Carolina	Jeff Hall, Weyerhauser's Cool Springs Environmental Ctr.	jeffhall@coolsprings.org (252) 633-7698, ext. 4017#
February 2, 2006	Butterflies in North Carolina	Will Cook and Jeff Pippen	Cwcook@duke.edu
March 2, 2006	Making Your Backyard a Wildlife Habitat Area	Chris Moorman, NC State	chris_moorman@ncsu.edu
April 6, 2006	Birds of the Blue Ridge Mountains	Curtis Smalling, North Carolina Audubon	csmalling@audubon.org
May 4, 2006	Flora and Fauna of El Salvador	Loren Hintz, Chapel Hill High Biology Teacher	lhintz@chccs.k12.nc.us

**New Hope Audubon Society Monthly Meetings begin at 7 p.m. at the Totten Center in the North Carolina Botanical Gardens located at the Intersection of 15-501 and Old Mason Farm Road in Chapel Hill. Meet & Greet and Chapter Business begins at 7:20; and the Program begins about 7:45.*

New Hope Audubon Society Field Trips Calendar (Late August-October 2005)

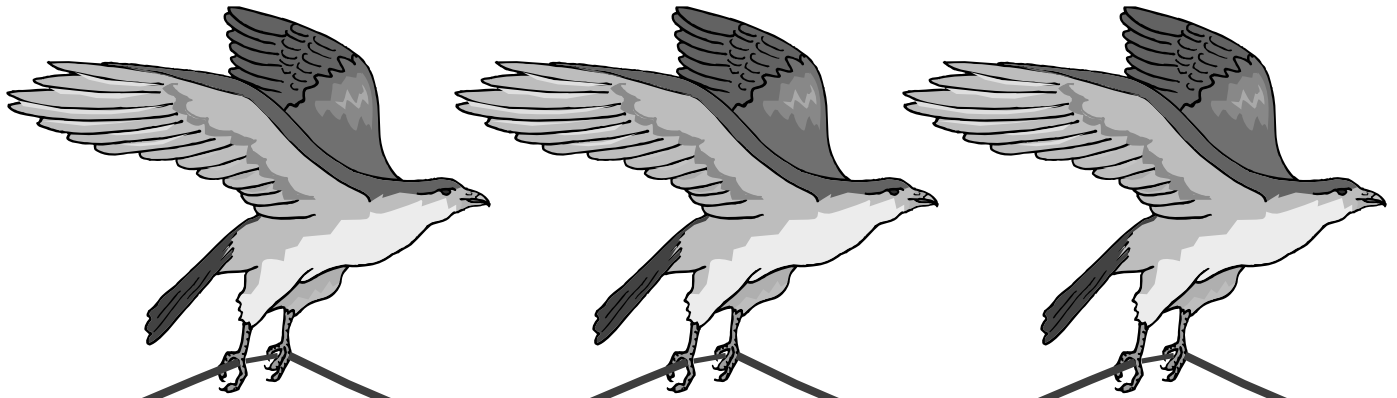
DATE/TIME	ACTIVITY	CONTACT
Saturday, August 27	Bird Walk: Meet at 7:55 a.m. inside Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center Destination: local birding spot Notes: All levels welcome	Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox - 668-1707
Saturday, September 3	Stream Watch: 8:00 a.m.	John Kent, 933-5650
Saturday, September 10	Bird Walk: Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Duke Gardens Parking Lot Destination: Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham	Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox Please pre-register by calling 668-1707
Saturday, September 24	Bird Walk: Meet at 7:55 a.m. inside Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center Destination: local birding spot Notes: All levels welcome Dragonfly Walk: Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Horton Pond, Chatham County Destination: Horton Pond, an area good for dragonflies, other insects, wildflowers, herbs, and birds. This trip will focus on species that are easy to recognize in the field. Notes: Beginners welcome	Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox, 668-1707 Trip Leader: Joshua Rose, Duke Natural History Society. Call for directions - (919) 929-8266 or see Site 4 at http://tbg.carolinanature.com/farr.html
Saturday, October 1	Bird Walk: Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Duke Gardens Parking Lot Destination: Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham	Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox. Please pre-register by calling 668-1707
Saturday, October 8	Bird Walk: Meet at 7:55 a.m. inside Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center Destination: local birding spot Notes: All levels welcome Stream Watch: 9:00 a.m.	Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox, 668-2707 John Kent, 933-5650
Saturday, October 15	Bird Walk: We will carpool from University Mall parking lot, in front of Dillard's. Meet at 6:30 a.m. Destination: Sandhills, probably Weymouth Woods, to see red-cockaded woodpeckers Notes: The trip date is tentative. Please call Dianne Byrne at (919) 929-8266 or check the website for confirmation.	Trip Leader: Tom Driscoll
Sunday, October 16	Piedmont Explorations: Horton Grove Preserve, Durham County; 1-4 p.m. Destination: Horton Grove Preserve in northeastern Durham County. On this off-trail hike, we will explore the forests, slopes, and streams of this 594-acre Preserve owned and managed by the Triangle Land Conservancy. The Preserve includes a large portion of the Lake Michie Slopes natural heritage site. Meeting Place: Horton Grove Preserve, directions and parking details available at the TLC registration website. Notes: Pre-registration required. Register at www.tlc-nc.org/calendar.shtml or call (919) 833-3662, ext. 102 Fee: \$5/person or \$10/family. Please dress for the weather, bring plenty of water, and leave pets at home.	Trip Leaders: Carol Ann McCormick, NC Botanical Garden; Mark Peifer, UNC Biology Department; and Jeff Masten, Director of Conservation Strategies for Triangle Land Conservancy
Saturday, October 22	Bird Walk: Meet at 7:55 a.m. inside Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center Destination: local birding spot Notes: All levels welcome	Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox, 668-1707

New Hope Audubon Society 2005-2006 Officers

OFFICE	NAME	TELEPHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
President	VACANT		
Vice-President	Robin Moran	383-3514	robomo@earthlink.com
Secretary	Pat Reid	542-2433	photopr@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Karsten Rist		karsten.rist@verizon.net
Education Chair	Kate Finlayson	545-0737	katefin@yahoo.com
Conservation Chair	Susan Pratt	967-0593	sepratt@email.unc.edu
Field Trips Chair	Dianne Byrne	929-8266	DianneByrne713@aol.com
Newsletter	Robin Langdon	932-7888	chuckrobin@bellsouth.net
Webmaster	Patrick Coin	544-3239	web@newhopeaudubon.org
Stream Watch	John Kent	933-5650	jkent@tmug.org
Adopt-a-Highway	Philip Johnson	933-0144	pjphilip@earthlink.net
Eagle Count	Stewart Pearce	942-7660	spearce@yankelovich.com
Hospitality Chair	Joanna Hiller	968-3791	hille006@mc.duke.edu
Eagle Platform	Judy Murray	942-2985	jmurray@unc.edu
Membership Chair	VACANT		
Birdseed Sales Chair	Judy Murray	942-2985	jmurray@unc.edu
Wildathon Chair	VACANT		
Director	Philip Johnson	933-0144	pjphilip@earthlink.net
Director	Judy Murray	942-2985	jmurray@unc.edu
Program Chair	Tom Driscoll	932-7966	btdriscoll@bellsouth.net

New Hope Audubon Society
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www.newhopeaudubon.org

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Bird Seed Sale!

Bird Friendly Coffee!

It's time for the annual New Hope Audubon Society Bird Seed Sale. We are again offering bird-friendly Sanctuary Coffee™ from the folks at Counter Culture Coffee for those who can only lift their binoculars after they've hoisted a cup of caffeine.

First the basics...On the other side of **this insert** is an ORDER FORM. Remember, the NHAS bird seed sale happens only **once** per year, so order enough seed to last through the entire winter. Remember, order enough coffee to help you face that snow with a smile on your face. Fill out the order form and send it **WITH A CHECK FOR THE FULL AMOUNT** to:

Judy Murray
New Hope Audubon Society Bird Seed Sale
406 Holly Lane
Chapel Hill NC 27514

Please have those order forms and checks in by OCTOBER 15, 2005.

Next, cut out the handy reminder from the Newsletter and put it on your refrigerator, reminding you to come to the Wild Bird Center (Eastgate Shopping Center, Chapel Hill) on **Saturday, October 29, 2005 between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. to PICK UP YOUR ORDER.** A cadre of volunteers will be on hand to help you load your seed & coffee into your car.

If you live in Ferrington Village, Carolina Meadows or Carol Woods, a smiling NHAS volunteer will **DELIVER** your order to your door. We also deliver to any elderly or handicapped person – please draw a map to your house and include it with your order form.

