

New Hope Audubon Society Newsletter



Volume 31, Number 5: November-December 2005

Upcoming Unique Field Trips in November and December

Dianne Byrne

In addition to our very important birding trips, we have two field trips to view other forms of wildlife this winter. We are extremely fortunate to have the world's largest sanctuary for rare and endangered prosimians, the Duke Primate Center, right here in the triangle. On November 19 (Saturday), we will have a guided tour of the primate center in Durham. Prosimians are animals such as lemurs that evolved from the primate family tree long before monkeys and apes. The center's purpose is to promote research and understanding of prosimians and their natural habitat. See the center's website at <http://primatecenter.duke.edu> to enjoy pictures of babies raised at the center and to understand more about this unique center in the triangle.

Our tour will begin at 9:30 am and last approximately one hour. There is a reduced fee of \$4 per person for our group. We need to inform the center of the size of our group by November 15, so please notify Dianne Byrne by that date if you plan to join the tour. The center is located on Erwin Road near the intersection with NC 751. Dianne will provide directions when you contact her.

In December, bring children and enjoy the animals living at another kind of wildlife sanctuary in the triangle. The Carnivore Preservation Trust provides home to carnivores in need of rescue, such as animals discarded from the entertainment industry or the exotic pet trade. The facility provides an opportunity to observe and learn about lesser-known carnivores. We will see tigers, binturongs, caracals, kinkajous, snow leopards, and other species. See the Trust's website for a description of their animals (www.cptigers.org) and to obtain directions. The address is 1940 Hanks Chapel Road, Pittsboro (off Highway 64 East).

Cost is \$5 per child and \$10 per adult for our guided tour. Tour begins at 2 PM and will last from 90 minutes to 2 hours. The organization will provide additional guides for our group, if necessary, and has asked that we inform them ahead of time of the number of participants. If you plan to join the tour, please notify Dianne Byrne by November 28. Carpools will be arranged from the shopping center at the intersection of Jones Ferry Road and the Highway 54 bypass.

The September Dragonfly Walk

Dianne Byrne

Dr. Joshua Rose's Dragonfly walk on September 24 was much more than a dragonfly walk. Our group of 15 included people who know and enjoy many species of fauna and flora, and together we identified spiders, frogs, butterflies, praying mantises, katydids, and wildflowers. We didn't see as many dragonflies as we would have liked, probably because it was a little windy during our walk; however, the ones we saw were marvelous!



PHOTO BY TED JOHNSON

It appears that there isn't a dragonfly or damselfly unknown to Josh, as he called out the names as they flew by or were seen perching along the water's edge. Some perched on twigs over

the water, giving us an opportunity for a close, long look. Others flew quickly over the grasses or water, making us work a little harder to see them. My favorite dragonflies were the Eastern pondhawks. The male's face and eyes were green, but its thorax and abdomen were a powdery, Carolina blue. Its wings were clear, with brown bars at the edges. The female Eastern pondhawk's entire body was bright green, with black markings. Each was pretty separately, and the pair together made a colorful copulation wheel. We

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The September Dragonfly Walk

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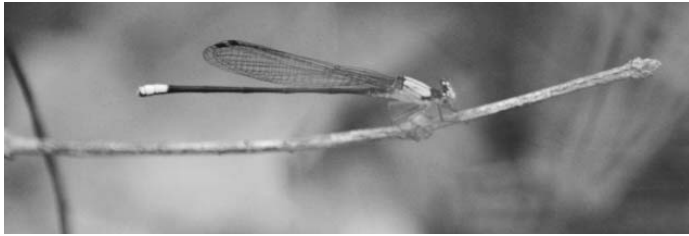


PHOTO BY BUD WEBSTER

were fortunate to see one pair in this wheel and to witness the female depositing eggs into the water afterwards. Other species of dragonflies that we enjoyed include the Eastern amberwing, blue dasher, and the slaty skimmer (a gorgeous dark slate blue). All of the dragonflies we saw belong to the skimmer family.

The damselflies were smaller and perched with wings closed over their bodies, as opposed to dragonflies that perch with wings open. One damselfly was particularly pretty, and it perched for a fairly long time near the pond's edge, allowing the photographers in the group an opportunity for a good photo. It was a male blue-fronted dancer, with striking blue and black colors. The abdomen was mostly black, but the tip (the last 3 segments) was bright blue, matching the blue of the head and thorax.

Among the many other fauna inhabiting the Horton's Pond area, we saw tiny green cricket frogs, common buckeyes (in their life cycle stages of caterpillar, chrysalis, and mature butterfly), a white arrow-head spider, a green tree frog camouflaged against a leaf, a large Chinese mantis, a scorpion fly, differential grasshopper, a box turtle, and a meadow katydid. Some of the particularly pretty and abundant wildflowers that we saw include the purple *Gerardia* (host to buckeye caterpillars), golden jewel weed, meadow beauty and brilliant red Cardinal flower.

We have been fortunate to have Dr. Rose leading dragonfly walks in the triangle for the past few years as he completed his program at Duke. Unfortunately for us, Josh will be leaving North Carolina soon to take a position as Bird Program Specialist at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park in Texas. He will give dragonfly walks, backyard habitat workshops, nocturnal herpetology hikes, and design other activities for groups visiting the park. We sincerely wish him the very best and thank him for sharing his expertise with us.



PHOTO BY BUD WEBSTER

A Triangle Naturalist's Almanac

Patrick Coin



American Bird Grasshopper—a winter surprise. Most grasshoppers disappear with the first frosts of fall - they spend the

winter part of their life-cycle as eggs, waiting for spring to hatch. An exception is *Schistocerca americana*, called American Locust or American Bird Grasshopper. This large, active grasshopper is often flushed from the edges of woodlands on warm days during fall and winter. It has the peculiar habit of flying up into trees when disturbed, a habit unique to this genus.

American Bird Grasshoppers are members of the short-horned grasshopper family, Acrididae. The species occurs throughout eastern and central North America. It is somewhat migratory, ranging northward in summer to Canada. The closely related Desert Locust of the Old World, *Schistocerca gregaria*, is famous for forming migratory swarms and destroying crops. The American Bird Grasshopper is said to form damaging swarms on occasion, though I have not seen it in plague proportions in our area. It feeds on a wide range of vegetation, including crops, grasses, forbs, and the foliage of woody plants.

Look for American Bird Grasshoppers in old fields and even in open woodlands during the winter. Its large size and strong

flight are distinctive. For further information on this species, see: Milne and Milne, *The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Insects and Spiders*; Capinera, *Field Guide to Grasshoppers, Crickets, and Katydid of the United States*; bugguide.net.

The Naturalist's Bookshelf

Patrick Coin

Plenty of new selections are available for that well-rounded naturalist on your holiday shopping list. Topping the list is the stunning new *Snakes of the Southeast* (University of Georgia Press, \$23, paperback). This contains detailed accounts of the fifty-two snakes found in the southeastern United States. The photographs and layout are lovely. Life-history information is complete, yet not too technical. A unique chapter is *People and Snakes*, which discusses conservation of snakes, and the real and perceived dangers of venomous species.

Insect enthusiasts have a variety of interesting new guides to peruse. Long-awaited by lepidopterists is *Caterpillars of Eastern North America* (Princeton University Press, \$29 paperback \$60 hardcover). This 500-page work includes 700 species of caterpillars with over 1200 color photos. Both butterflies and moths are covered. *Caterpillars of Field and Garden* (Oxford University Press, \$30, paperback), has 900 color photographs. It is limited to the larvae of butterflies and skippers, but covers practically all of these, quite a feat. Speaking of moths, the long-awaited reprint of *Field Guide to*

Moths of Eastern North America is now available (Virginia Museum of Natural History, \$40, see www.vnmh.net).

Sure to make naturalists jump for joy is Field Guide to Grasshoppers, Katydid, and Crickets of the United States (Princeton University Press, \$29 paperback \$60 hardcover). This work has beautiful color illustrations of 206 species (about 1/3 of the fauna), range maps, sonograms, and discussions of identification and ecology. This guide is particularly welcome since many grasshoppers are showy, but there has never been a popular guide to this group with color illustrations. Lastly, serious dragonfly watchers may want to procure Dragonflies of Texas and the South-central United States (Princeton Paperbacks, \$30). This is a comprehensive guide, with color photographs, life history information, and technical diagrams of anatomy. Many of the species covered occur in North Carolina as well as Texas. The photographs of damselflies are especially valuable, as few are covered in other guides.

Reminder: Annual Bird Seed Sale

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. Below 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**

When: Sat., Oct. 29, 2005 between 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Where: WILD BIRD CENTER
EASTGATE SHOPPING CENTER, Chapel Hill**

Fall 2005 Membership Meetings

Tom Driscoll

On November 3, Michael Lanier of the NC Cooperative Extension will be speaking to us on "The many advantages of eating locally produced and pasture-raised meat, eggs, and dairy products." On December 1, Rick Albrecht will be speaking to us about bird photography.

The New Hope Audubon Society meets once per month, usually on the first Thursday of the month, from September through May. We meet at the Totten Center of the North Carolina Botanical Gardens at 7:00pm. The center is located on Highway 15-501 and Old Mason Farm Road. We visit and eat refreshments until 7:15pm and start chapter business soon thereafter. At 7:45pm, our presenter starts his/her presentation, and we usually end at 9:00pm. As you can see, we have exciting presentations for the fall membership meetings, so come out and join us. Everyone is welcome!

2005-2006 New Hope Audubon Membership Meeting Presentations

DATE	PRESENTATION*	SPEAKER	CONTACT INFO
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 PM 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 7:15; and the Program begins about 7:45. All are welcome to 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.*

Excerpts from N.C. Partners in Flight Fall 2005 Newsletter

Upcoming NC PIF Meetings:

**Spring Annual Meeting, March 28, 2006, 9:30
a.m.-4:30 p.m., Blue Jay Point County Park**

- Painted Bunting Monitoring and Research in NC, Jamie Rotenberg, UNC-W
- Effects of Landscape Context on Early-succession Songbird Nest Success in the Coastal Plain of North Carolina, Jason Riddle, NC State University
- Spatial and Temporal Variation in the Singing Rates of two Breeding Forest Songbirds: The Ovenbird and the Black-throated Blue Warbler, Jerome Brewster, NC State University
- Enhancing GAP vertebrate models to address the diverse needs of the avian conservation community, Ed Laurent, Southeast GAP Analysis Project
- Developing better information delivery for private forestland owners, Kevin Miller, NC State University

NC Birding Trail Update: June 2005

Lena Gallitano,

Interim NC Birding Trail Coordinator

The North Carolina Birding Trail (NCBT) is currently accepting site nominations for the coastal component of the trail that includes all counties east of and including I-95. The trail is initially being developed into 3 distinct components with the coastal component being developed first. The mission of the trail is to conserve and enhance North Carolina's bird habitat by promoting sustainable bird watching activities, economic opportunities and conservation education. The NCBT steering committee (with representatives from the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, Audubon NC, NC Sea Grant, NC Cooperative Extension, NC State Parks, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service) is working to build partnerships to establish this drivable trail to link birdwatchers with birding sites, businesses and other community attractions.

A regional meeting was held in Plymouth, NC on July 26th (similar to the meeting held earlier this year in Washington, NC) to promote the development and increase awareness about the many benefits of the NCBT. A full-time birding trail coordinator will soon be hired by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission.

The Carolina Bird Club board recently formally voted to support the NCBT.

Additional information about the NCBT is on the website at: www.ncbirdingtrail.org.

"Birding North Carolina"

A Guide to the Premier Birding Spots in NC

Edited by Marshall Brooks and Mark Johns

With contributions from the

members of the Carolina Bird Club

Falcon Press • ISBN: 0-7627-3134-6

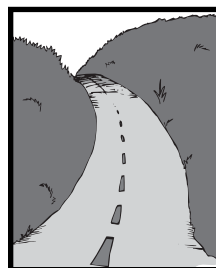


This project of the Carolina Bird Club and NC Partners in Flight (edited by Marshall Brooks of NC Wesleyan College and Mark Johns of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission) has been more than three years in the making and proceeds will go into a special account of the CBC to help benefit bird conservation projects in NC. It should now be available through a variety of book outlets.

For information see the Carolina Bird Club web site:
<http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/>

Websites of Potential Interest

- Bird conservation news and information from the *North American Bird Conservation Initiative* is distributed in The All-Bird Bulletin. The latest newsletter is always available at the NABCI web site (<http://www.nabci-us.org/>).
- The National Partners in Flight website has been updated at: <http://www.partnersinflight.org>
- **Optics for the Tropics** is non-profit organization that provides binoculars to ornithologists in the Caribbean and Latin America, where quality equipment is lacking. For information on this program and other aspects of the organization: <http://www.opticsfortropics.org>
- To submit questions or comments about the recovery of the **Ivory-billed Woodpecker**: ivorybill@fws.gov



Adopt-a-Highway

**Saturday
October 15, 2005
8:30 a.m.**

***Due to the uncertainty
about Stagecoach Road reopening,
interested folks should call
Phil Johnson to confirm.***

New Hope Audubon Society Field Trips Calendar (Mid-October-December 2005)

DATE/TIME	ACTIVITY	CONTACT
Saturday, October 15	<p>Bird Walk: We will carpool from University Mall parking lot, in front of Dillard's. Meet at 6:30 a.m.</p> <p>Destination: Sandhills, probably Weymouth Woods, to see red-cockaded woodpeckers</p> <p>Notes: The trip date is tentative. Please call Dianne Byrne at (919) 929-8266 or check the website for confirmation.</p>	<p>Trip Leader: Tom Driscoll</p>
Sunday, October 16	<p>Piedmont Explorations: Horton Grove Preserve, Durham County; 1-4 p.m.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Meeting Place: Horton Grove Preserve, directions and parking details available at the TLC registration website.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Trip Leaders: Carol Ann McCormick, NC Botanical Garden; Mark Peifer, UNC Biology Department; and Jeff Masten, Director of Conservation Strategies for Triangle Land Conservancy</p>
Saturday, October 22	<p>Bird Walk: Meet at 7:55 a.m. inside Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center</p> <p>Destination: local birding spot Notes: All levels welcome</p>	<p>Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox, 668-1707</p>
Saturday, November 5	<p>Stream Watch: 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Trip Leader: John Kent, 933-5650</p>
Saturday, November 5	<p>Bird Walk: Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Duke Gardens Parking Lot</p> <p>Destination: Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham</p>	<p>Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox, 668-1707</p>
Saturday, November 19	<p>Duke Primate Center: 9:30 a.m.</p> <p><i>Please see article about upcoming field trips for information.</i></p>	
Saturday, November 19	<p>Bird Walk: Meet at 7:55 a.m. inside Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center</p> <p>Destination: local birding spot Notes: All levels welcome</p>	<p>Trip Leader: Cynthia Fox, 668-1707</p>
Saturday, December 3	<p>Stream Watch: 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Trip Leader: John Kent, 933-5650</p>
Sunday, December 4	<p>Carnivore Preservation Trust: Pittsboro, NC: 2:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>Please see article about upcoming field trips for information.</i></p>	

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	Martha Girolami	362-5759	Mgirolami@cs.com
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Conservation Chair	Susan Pratt	967-0593	sepratt@email.unc.edu
Field Trips Chair	Dianne Byrne	929-8266	DianneByrne713@aol.com
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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

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