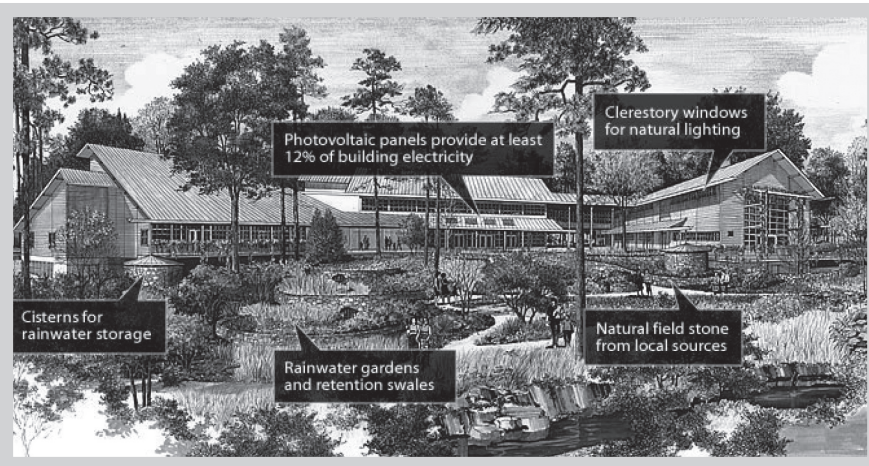


New Hope Audubon Society Newsletter



Volume 34, Number 6: November-December 2009

October 1, 2009 New Hope Audubon Society Membership Meeting



Our meeting started early with a tour of the new education center to the North Carolina Botanical Garden. Jim Ward of the NC Botanical Garden gave us a tour of the new facility and pointed out some of the great features. The new education center has almost 30,000 square feet of space with many new and old features. The facility has cisterns for rainwater collection to provide water for the plantings around the facility, natural field stone from local sources, photovoltaic cells, and clerestory windows for natural lighting. The NC Botanical Gardens is seeking green building council rating from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. They also reused wood flooring and trim from several old local houses. For more information,

see there website at <http://www.ncbg.unc.edu/pages/4/>. We held our membership meeting in the education center for the first time, as well.

After the tour of the new venue, Jeff Brewer (President of the Friends of the Mountain-to-Sea Trail) spoke to our group. He told us about the recent progress on the development of the North Carolina Mountains-to-Sea Trail in our state. There has been work recently to develop the trail in Orange County and the Falls Lake area. He also mentioned some upcoming trail development work days at Falls Lake and the Eno River State Park. For more information on the work days, see <http://www.ncmst.org/fallsworkday.html> or <http://www.ncmst.org/enoworkday.html>. He also discussed his hiking of the entire trail in 2003. The trail is about 1000 miles long and he had some great stories and photographs.

Heritage Day at Jordan Lake

by Tom Driscoll

On October 2, 2009, Pat Reid and I took the New Hope Audubon Society booth to Jordan Lake to participate in their thirteenth annual Heritage Day festival. The festival is held each year to celebrate the unique cultural and natural resources of the region. The founders "wanted to give visitors an opportunity to see and experience activities related to agricultural, communal, industrial, natural, and Native American history" (Heritage Day brochure). There were exhibits on native birds and animals that included skins and actual preserved birds (including a Bald Eagle). There were also live raptors on display. There were exhibits on Chatham County history, regional African American history, and farm activities. There were also several impressive clogging demonstrations. The event is free and held each year on the first Thursday in October. It was a beautiful day and the attendance was very good. Pat and I talked with a lot of interested bird watchers. Many attempted our bird identification quiz and all walked away with a better understanding of birds and what the New Hope Audubon Society does. We also heard a story of Whip-poor-wills and their incessant nightly calling. We plan to continue our participation in this event. See you there next year!

Eagle Count

by Martha Girolami

The next NHAS Bald Eagle Count will be held on Sunday, October 11 th from 7 am until 8:30 a.m. Please call Martha Girolami if you would like to join up with other birders to count the Eagles. After this October count, the next count will be Sunday, January 10, 2010.

Membership Meeting Presentations for Nov. & Dec.

The **November 5, 2009 membership meeting presentation** will be "The effects of urbanization on amphibians, reptiles, ground nesting birds, and mesopredator mammals in the Sandhills". We will hear about the animals, including Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, of the sandhill region in southern North Carolina and how increased building and human contact are impacting them. Dr. Ron Sutherland of Duke University will be presenter.

The **December 3, 2009 membership meeting presentation** will be "Platte River, NE Sandhill Crane and Least Tern Surveys" by Jeff Marcus of the NC Department of Natural Resources and Ecology. Jeff will discuss his work prior to coming to NC.

Our membership meetings are held at the Totten Center at the North Carolina Botanical Gardens on the first Thursday of every month (except June, July, and August). The gardens are on Highway 15-501 at the intersection of Old Mason Farm Road on the southeast corner. The parking lot is on the southeast corner too. The meetings start at 7 p.m. (please remember that the September meeting is an exception beginning at 6:30 p.m.) with refreshments, chatting with friends, and meeting visitors or new members. There is chapter business at 7:20 or so and the presentations start at approximately 7:45 and run through 9:00. **Everyone, even non-members, is welcome! See you at meeting!**

Adopt-a-Highway Program



Once per quarter, we gather to pick up the trash on the road and the next gathering is scheduled for December 5, 2009 at 7:30am. Adopt-a-highway program is one of the many programs sponsored by your New Hope Audubon Society. In this case, we have "adopted" Stagecoach Road which is located in the southeastern corner of

Durham County, near Chatham and Orange Counties. The road is bounded by Ferrington Rd. and Highway 751. This

kind of project gives us a lot of visibility and many drivers stop to thank us.

However, we are in danger of discontinuing this program. Fewer and fewer in our Audubon society are participating in picking up the trash, so we need more volunteers. If we do not get more than 6 participants, then we plan to discontinue our adopt-a-highway program. If you are interested in participating, then please show up at the parking lot along Stagecoach Road or contact me at spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com. You'll have fun and make a positive contribution to our environment.

I have trash bags and orange day-glow vests for visibility. I also have "grabbers" that enable one to pick up the trash without too much bending over! Please bring gloves.

Note that I found a \$10 bill during one of our trash pickups. See you there!

Feeder Watch

by Tom Driscoll

The "Feeder Watch" articles are now five years old. Although we primarily discuss the birds you can see at your feeders, migrants are going south now so look for them as they pass through your yard; they may interact with "your" birds. Last year, I saw a Canada Warbler bathing in our backyard water feature, so keep your eyes open.

Our year-round residents that frequent feeders include Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Blue Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Brown-headed Nuthatch. Can you recognize these birds? Of course, the Northern Cardinal is the state bird and the male is very red. Although at this time of year, they may appear scraggly as they are molting. They shed their feathers for a new set. This is a gradual process that may take several months.

We have several species, including Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, that regularly dine at suet feeders. Other woodpeckers, including the Pileated Woodpecker, and other residents, such as Eastern Bluebirds and Brown Thrashers may also eat suet. Some residents, such as American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds, eat berries from the Holly Bushes, Dogwood, and juniper trees in your yard. You may not be the only one watching the birds at your feeders. Hawks, such as Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, feed on small birds and may also be "feeding" at your feeders. Have you seen any smallish hawks?

In the last feeder watch article, I wrote that my birds were eating suet as fast as they could and there was a "waiting line" for birds wanting to get at the suet. Harriette Frank responded that she also has many birds and bird species eating suet. The resident birds that don't migrate remain and our winter visitors, migrants from the north may be starting to show up. You should be receiving this newsletter in mid-October. The leaves are starting to fall which will

make the birds easier to spot! The days are much shorter and the temperatures are colder. All these factors usually make birds feed intensively at feeders, but mine aren't very hungry or they're finding food elsewhere. I have noticed that some birds, including my bluebirds, are eating the Dogwood "berries".

Our hummingbirds are leaving now or will leave soon. However, we still have a couple of females or immature males (without much red on their chins) in the area defending the feeders. I urge you to keep your feeders up for another month or so because we sometimes have "western" hummingbirds, such as Rufous or Calliope Hummingbirds, spend the winter. If you do see a different hummingbird or have questions or comments about your feeder birds, then please contact me at spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com.

Publicity Intern or Volunteer Opportunity

The New Hope Audubon Society is looking for someone with energy and ideas (and maybe some free time) to set up a system and contacts for informing potential members and participants of our activities. We hope to grow our

membership through better publicity of our activities. We are seeking someone who has organizational skills, has worked with or understands the needs of non-profit organizations. Someone who is computer literate with website skills and ideas, can establish and work with media contacts, and is interested in working with us to advocate for nature and the environment in Chatham, Durham, and Orange Counties. If you are this person, then please contact the Tom Driscoll (vice president) of the New Hope Audubon Society at spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com. Thanks for your consideration.

Eagle Observation Platform

At long last New Hope Audubon's Eagle Observation Platform at Jordan Lake is back on the front burner and construction should start in the very near future. After over two years of delay, we are moving forward with our Eagle Observation Platform. The new platform will be at a new site off Martha's Chapel Road with several miles of trails and a great view to the north up Jordan Lake towards the nesting areas of our bald eagles. Construction is expected to take place in October and trail building to follow during the winter months. Look forward to opportunities to help build trails and a dedication ceremony in the near future.

New Hope Audubon Society Activities Calendar

Sunday, Nov 1, 9-11 a.m., **Jordan Lake Walk** led by Ranger Steve McMurray, location Seaforth Recreation Area Pond Trail, located at the beach parking lot.

Thursday, Nov 5 **General Membership Meeting** AT NC Botanical Gardens 7:00 p.m. The speaker will be Dr. Ron Sutherland on "The effects of urbanization on amphibians, reptiles, ground nesting birds, and mesopredator mammals in the Sandhills"

Saturday Nov. 7 **Bird Walk at Duke Gardens** with Cynthia Fox. Meet at Duke Gardens at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday Nov 7 **Stream Watch** with John Kent. 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Nov. 15th. Tom Driscoll will lead a **Bird Walk** to a to be determined destination in the Triangle. Meet at the Mardi Gras parking lot (Farrington Rd. at Hwy. 54 in Chapel Hill) at 1 p.m. We will look for recent winter arrivals. Bring water and adequate shoes. Easy walking, and we should be out 2 to 3 hours. Please contact Tom Driscoll at spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com if you intend to attend this trip.

Nov 17, 9-11 a.m., **Jordan Lake Walk** led by Ranger Steve McMurray, location Seaforth Recreation Area Pond Trail, located at the beach parking lot.

Saturday Nov. 21 **Bird Walk to Local Hot Spot** with Cynthia Fox, owner of Wild Bird Center in Eastgate Shopping Center, Chapel Hill. Meet at the store at 7:55 a.m. and return to the store by 10:00 a.m. Carpools leave from the store.

Dec 2, 9-11 am, **Jordan Lake Walk** led by Ranger Steve McMurray, location Vista Point Recreation Area meet at trail head at restrooms near group camping.

Thursday Dec 3. **General Membership Meeting** at NC Botanical Gardens. 7:00 p.m. The speaker will be Jeff Marcus on "Platte River, NE Sandhill Crane and Least Tern Surveys"

Saturday Dec 5, **Stream Watch** with John Kent 9:00 a.m.

Saturday Dec 5, 9-11 a.m., **Jordan Lake Walk** led by Ranger Steve McMurray, location Vista Point Recreation Area meet at trail head at restrooms near group camping.

Sunday Dec. 13th. **Tom Driscoll will lead a Bird Walk** to a to be determined destination in the Triangle. Meet at the Mardi Gras parking lot (Farrington Rd. at Hwy. 54 in Chapel Hill) at 1 p.m. We will look for recent winter arrivals. Bring water and adequate shoes. Easy walking, and we should be out 2 to 3 hours. Please contact Tom Driscoll at spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com if you intend to attend this trip.

New Hope Audubon Society
Box 2693
Chapel Hill, NC 27515
www.newhopeaudubon.org

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New Hope Audubon Society 2008-2009 Officers

OFFICE	NAME	TELEPHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
President	Robert "Bo" Howes	370-3202	rchowes007@hotmail.com
Vice-President	Tom Driscoll	932-7966	spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com
Secretary	Pat Reid	542-2433	photopr@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Karsten Rist	490-5718	karstenrist@verizon.net
Director	Robin Moran	383-3514	robomo@earthlink.net
Director	John Kent	933-5650	jkent@tmug.org
Director	Vacant		
Conservation Chair	Vacant		
Education Chair	Kate Finlayson	545-0737	katefin@yahoo.com
Field Trip Chair	Linda Gaines	968-9787	lggaines.95@alum.mines.edu
Hospitality Chair	Martha Girolami	362-5759	mgiorlami@mac.com
Membership Chair	Karen Olson	489-1283	karenolson@earthlink.net
Program Chair	Tom Driscoll	932-7966	spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor	Pat Reid	542-2433	photopr@yahoo.com
Webmaster	David Curtin	919-245-3475	dfcurtin@mail.fpg.unc.edu
Adopt-a-Highway	Phillip Johnson	933-0144	pjphilip@earthlink.net
Bird Seed Sale	Judy Murray	942-2985	jmurray@unc.edu
Eagle Count	Martha Girolami	362-5759	mgiorlami@mac.com
Eagle Platform	Robert "Bo" Howes	370-3202	rchowes007@hotmail.com
Important Bird Areas: Eno River Chair	Tom Driscoll	932-7966	spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com
Important Bird Areas: Jordan Lake Chair	Robert "Bo" Howes	370-3202	rchowes007@hotmail.com
Mini Breeding Bird	Marsha Stephens	618-2298	stephens@mail.fpg.unc.edu
Stream Watch	John Kent	933-5650	jkent@tmug.org
Wildathon Co-Chairs	Tom Driscoll	932-7966	spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com
	Karsten Rist	490-5718	karstenrist@verizon.net