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THE BULLETIN...
Chapel Hill Bird Club
November/December 2005
<http://chbc.carolinanature.com>



To :

Vol. 34

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>} *Thought for the Day* >} >} >}

>> **NEXT MEETING: Monday, Nov. 28**
Program: "Piping Plovers"

"We will never find a way home until we find a way to look the caribou, the salmon, the lynx, and the white-throated sparrow in the face, without guile, with no plan of betrayal ~ *Barry Lopez*

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When/Where: 7:15pm./refreshments; 7:30pm./meeting
The lounge, Olin T. Binkley Baptist Church, corner of Hwy. 15-501 bypass and Willow Dr., behind University Mall, Chapel Hill.

Christmas Counts Upcoming...

Who/What: Sidney Maddock of Hatteras Island, NC will present a program on the threatened Piping Plover. Using wonderful photographs taken in Florida, N. Carolina, Massachusetts, and other locations, Sidney will provide an exciting view into the life of this small shorebird on its breeding and wintering grounds. Whether looking at a 5-day-old chick that is just a few inches tall or an aerial view of beautiful shorebird habitat at Cape Lookout National Seashore, the photographs will provide a new perspective on this rare species and serve as a springboard for an interesting discussion of current recovery efforts.

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If you like counting birds you're in the right place at the right time. Christmas bird counts are around the corner with multiple opportunities to participate in the Triangle area (and of course even more farther afield in the state). *Note:* the Chapel Hill count is the very day after Xmas when many folks will likely still be on vacation, so I suspect Will can use any extra help he can get if you're available this year. (Also, there will be no Bird Club meeting or newsletter in Dec. so please hold onto these dates as your sole reminder.)

~ Saturday Morning Field Trips ~

Chapel Hill Monday, 26 December 2005
Contact: Will Cook, cwcook@duke.edu (919)382-9134

Local field trips, generally led by Doug Shadwick, depart from Glen Lennox Shopping Center parking lot off Hwy 54 promptly at 7:30 am. most Saturday mornings. All skill levels welcome. Trips are usually over by noon. Dress for the weather and for walking. For further details call Doug at 942-0479. *NOTE:* there will be no regular outing Nov. 26 (T'giving weekend), nor the last 3 Saturdays of Dec. (Xmas bird-count period -- see next column).

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Raleigh/Wake County Saturday, 17 December 2005
Contact: John Connors, John.Connors@ncmail.net (919)755-0253

Durham Sunday, 18 December 2005
Contact: Mike Schultz, ross.gull@verizon.net (919)490-6761

Falls Lake Monday, 2 January 2006 and,
Kerr Lake Thursday, 5 January 2006
Contact: Brian Bockhahn, cbockhahn4@earthlink.net (919)676-1027

Membership Renewal Time Approaching...

Jordan Lake Sunday, 1 January 2006
Contact: Carol Williamson, cncbrdr@yahoo.com (919)383-2364

MOST CHBC membership renewals come due in January (if you're uncertain check your mailing label). Please try to send in renewals promptly (\$15 per yr. or \$10/yr. for students, and you may renew for multiple years if you like) to Ruth Roberson's address on page 4.

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[*note from the Treasurer:* Last year we decided that the Club would pay the fees for the C.H. Xmas bird count, rather than asking count participants to pay the fees. To help finance that payment, which last year was \$180, those of us who do not participate in the counts can make a donation to the club. So, 36 of us who prefer not to go out in the cold, wet, icy December mornings can make a donation of \$5 and sleep late on the day of the count!]

Who's Who -- Getting To Know Your Fellow Club Members

Dr. Patrick Coin has been actively learning Piedmont Natural history... and teaching it to others since arriving in the Triangle from Minnesota some 17 years ago. Pat grew up in Oklahoma where he says he started birding as soon as he looked out the family's big picture window, and a family-move to California at age 8 opened his eyes to western birds as well. Appropriately, his first date with wife Margaret involved eagle-watching.

Pat has lived all over the U.S. lending him 530 birds on his N. American list, and he has almost double that on his world list (but so far, no Andean Condor, which he cites atop his wish-list). La Selva Biological Station in Costa Rica and Kakadu National Park in Australia are a couple of his favorite worldly locales, and having a Lyrebird stroll right in front of him in Australia is one of the most memorable thrills out of his birding past. Mason Farm and the Sandhills area of NC. are among his favorite areas closer to home.

Pat has worked in the area of human health and the environment all his life, and currently teaches at Durham Technical Community College. He cites Loren Eiseley's "The Immense Journey" as a favorite read -- a book that has had tremendous staying power over the 60 years since its initial publication (not a birding volume, but essays on spiritual aspects of biology).

Besides birding, Pat enjoys classical music, photography, botany, and insect-watching -- the latter an interest/endeavor he shares with his 5-year-old daughter Emily who he notes is still "working on her birds." With Dad Pat as her instructor that no doubt will easily come in due time.

Before retiring to a Blue Ridge mountain retreat (Sparta, NC), Jim Keighton spent over 25 highly productive years in the Triangle area, and still maintains his CHBC membership. For 12 of those years Jim taught middle school, and for another 13 helped develop exhibits and science education at the North Carolina Museum of Life and Science in Durham. No doubt many young nature enthusiasts were inspired along their way by Jim's work (just as he had been inspired as a kid by family and teachers growing up in Pennsylvania).

During all those years Jim was also active with New Hope Audubon where he served in many capacities (including Pres.), and worked to protect the Bald Eagle population at Jordan Lake, for which he received one of several awards over the years. Still today, the Bald Eagle tops his list of favorite Triangle birds -- a bird many of us finds takes your breath away no matter how many times you see it locally. In a similar vein Jim names the Andean and California Condors as two birds he would yet love to see. And as a greatest birding thrill he recalls watching a "tornado" of 2000 Broad-winged Hawks swarming over Mahogany Rock in the fall of 1994.

While the Monteverde Cloud Forest of Costa Rica is a favorite worldly spot, Jim is lucky to be able to cite his own home area on the Blue Ridge migratory pathway as his top birding locale -- and with a yard list of 166

species and an annual hawkwatch in the 1000's it would be hard to argue with that.

-- Winter Hummers --

It's that time of year again. Every winter a few more folks in the Triangle leave out hummingbird feeders hoping to attract winter (mostly western) hummers to their yards at this odd time of year; and every year a few lucky folks succeed. Susan Campbell has closely studied this growing phenomenon for years. If you spot one of these winged jewels in your yard this season be sure to contact her at: susan@ncaves.com or 910-949-3207.

And Keep An Eye Out For...

An earlier report on 'Birdchat' noted that many crop sources in eastern Canada were "patchy or spotty" this season, so the winter ahead could be good for irruptive finch species down our way. (Please pass this information along to all the Evening Grosbeaks you know!)

-- Some Oct. Sightings --

through Oct. -- A lone **Ruddy Duck** continued to reside at Am. Legion Pond in Chapel Hill as it had throughout most of 2005.

Oct 1, 3 -- Judy Murray has a **Baltimore Oriole** at her Chapel Hill yard feeder, and 2 days later one shows up in Lena Gallitano's Raleigh yard (she had over a dozen last winter).

Oct 1 -- Rob Gluck reports an early **Hermit Thrush** along Bolin Creek Greenway, Chapel Hill and Will Cook spots a **Philadelphia Vireo** at Mason Farm.

Oct 4 -- Randy Dunson still has 1-2 **RT Hummingbirds** lingering at his Hillsborough yard feeder.

Oct 7 -- Will Cook reports an early **Dark-eyed Junco** in Duke Forest.

Through early Oct. Shelley Theye reports nice array of migrants in her Chatham County yard including **Swainson's, Gray-cheeked, and Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanager, and, on Oct 10, Bay-breasted Warbler and Yellow-billed Cuckoo.**

Oct 11 -- 5 **BRANT** found at Lake Crabtree Park in Morrisville by Doug Shadwick, and viewed by several birders over the next few days.

Oct 18 -- A **Red-breasted Nuthatch and White-throated Sparrow** arrive in Jonathan Steere's Durham county yard.

Oct 22 -- Kent Fiala sees 1-2 **Ravens** fly over his Orange County yard.

Oct 23 -- Ginger Travis spots an **Am. Bittern** off the Brickhouse Rd. area in Durham County.

Oct 26 -- Jonathan Steere sees his first **Dark-eyed Junco** of season in Durham yard.

Oct 29 -- Steve Shultz notes some winter arrivals appearing at points around Raleigh, including **Ring-**

necked Ducks, Ruddies, Gadwall, N. Shovelers, White-crowned Sparrows, Palm Warblers, and American Pipits.

Oct 30 -- Mike Schultz recorded an **Orange-crowned Warbler** at suet in his Durham yard.

Oct 31 -- The month ended with Jeff Pippen and Jacob Socolar finding **3 Vesper and 1 White-crowned Sparrow** in northern Orange County, and Lena Gallitano reporting **4 Baltimore Orioles** back in her Raleigh yard.

-- Interesting 'Nova' Episode --

An Oct. 18th edition of PBS's 'Nova' featured two locals of note: Duke University's award-winning neurobiologist Dr. Erich Jarvis was highlighted in a very interesting profile of him and his work re-evaluating the neuroanatomy and intelligence of birds.

Immediately following Jarvis's segment was a piece highlighting fish surgery done by Dr. Greg Lewbart, a vet with the NCSU Veterinary School. For bird club members though Greg may be better noted for writing a prescient 1996 novel, entitled "Ivory Hunters," which told of the re-discovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker well before either the 1999 Pearl River claims or the current Arkansas excitement.

Read Up!

If you like to mix in a bit of the literary with your love of birds then you'll like a new book out, **The Bedside Book of Birds -- an avian miscellany**, by Graeme Gibson -- a rather interesting and quirky mix of essays, literature, poems, and delightful pictures all pertaining to our avian friends. Something in it for almost every bird-enthusiast.

Scott Wiedensaul has a new book out: **Return To Wild America**, in which he re-traces the journey of Roger Tory Peterson and James Fisher from their classic **Wild America** volume of 50 years ago. Gotta be good!

Finally, several months ago I mentioned Donald Kroodsmas's new book, **The Singing Life of Birds -- The Art and Science of Listening to Birdsong**, in the *Bulletin*. I still have not read it myself, but the reviews I've seen are so overwhelmingly glowing I felt it deserved a second mention here. If you, like me, don't think of birdsong as a topic inherently fascinating, this volume may prove you wrong!

Interesting Factoid of the Month:

The following bit of information was gleaned from an October thread on 'Carolinabirds' regarding high-flying birds: The highest-flying bird ever recorded was a Ruppell's Griffon, a vulture with a wingspan of about 10 feet, that was sucked into a jet engine 37,900 feet above the Ivory Coast on November 29, 1975... Amazing!

AND, in another 'Carolinabirds' note, listserv owner Will Cook recently observed that the internet North-and-South Carolina birding listserv had attained its 700th subscriber! If you're not already one of them go to

Will's website (<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook>) to learn how to join the best birding listserv in the entire country, south of Virginia and north of Georgia ; -)

Holy Grail Update...

(check for any late-breaking Ivory-bill news at:
<http://ivorybills.blogspot.com>)

After making the cover of virtually every birding magazine out there, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker (and its Arkansas story) was covered by CBS's '60 Minutes' in an Oct. segment. By the time you read this Cornell's searchers will be slogging through Arkansas and elsewhere, with 'believers' awaiting additional sightings and 'skeptics' still clamoring for a definitive photo or video.

-- More Thailand Birding --

In case you didn't get quite enough of Thailand from David and Judy Smith's wonderful October presentation, Tom and Barbara Driscoll have sent along this (shortened for the newsletter) report on their recent visit there: (if you'd like more details contact Tom at bttdriscoll@bellsouth.net):

We found out that I was going to help teach an air pollution course on developing emissions inventories for South Asia nation representatives in September of this year. I immediately researched the internet and the big bird guide companies to see where to bird in Thailand and what guides are available. I also contacted others, such as Magnus Persmark, who had birded there for their advice, and bought the Bird Guide to Thailand by Craig Robson from the Wild Bird Center in Chapel Hill (thanks Cynthia for carrying these kinds of bird books!) I finally chose Kamol Kamolphalein of Nature Trails, who had helped illustrate the original Thailand Bird Guide, to guide us for six days.

While I was teaching the first week, Barbara went on day trips to the old capital, the Bridge of the River Kwai, the Royal Palace, and Jim Thompson's House of Silk. When the class was over our guide, Kamol, took us to the Khok Kham area, southwest of Bangkok. In the marshlands and salt flats near the ocean we saw many shorebirds, including redshanks, sandpipers, and the Pacific Golden-Plover. My favorite was the Broad-billed Sandpiper, a lifer for me. We also saw 6 kinds of kingfishers in this area, and many waders including Little and Great Egrets and Grey Herons., and Crab-eating Macaques.

Next we went to the Wat Chong Lom Buddhist Temple to look at the Germain's Swiftlet. The temple is near the ocean and the swifts began to nest in the open-fronted temple some years ago. When the monk at the temple was dying, he said that the temple must remain open to the swifts and so has remained open for many years. The latest monk was taking care of several baby swifts that had fallen out of nests. Thais make soup out of the nests that are made of dirt and bird spit.

After lunch (no we didn't eat the nests), we drove to the Kampeang Sane area where we saw our first of many Arctic Warblers, an early migrant. We also saw the Forest Wagtail and the Stork-billed Kingfisher. Later, at a nearby agricultural university we saw Lesser Whistling-ducks, Bronze-winged Jacana, Asian Open-billed Storks, several species of starlings, White-breasted Waterhen, Green Bee-eaters, Richard's Pipit, Pintail Snipe, Brown and Long-tailed Shrikes, and Plain-backed Sparrows.

Field trips, counts, meetings/talks, webpage, newsletter, checklists, fun, knowledge... your Chapel Hill Bird Club!

The next day we woke up early to begin the first of 3 days in KY, a large park in a mountainous region of eastern Thailand. The park contained lots of trees which is great because only about 19% of the country is forested. Highlights included three species of hornbills including the amazingly loud Giant Hornbill, Orange-breasted and Red-headed Trogons, Dollarbird and Indian Rollers, Banded Kingfisher, 4 species of barbets, Green Malkoha, Greater Coucal, several species of sunbirds, Shikra (an accipiter), Blyth's Hawk-Eagle, Crested Goshawk, Crested Serpent-Eagle, Black Eagle, and the Scarlet Minivet. We also saw some early migrants such as the Blue Rock-Thrush, 5 species of drongos, 8 of the 13 bulbul species, and both male and female Red Junglefowl which is the predecessor of modern day chickens.

After KY, we drove back to Bangkok to fly to Chiang Mai in the northwest part of Thailand, a silk and market center. We planned to stop there before returning home. After landing, we drove to the northern outskirts of the city to scan some fields. where we saw the Pied Bushchat, a bushlark, White-throated Kingfisher, and several more wagtail species. We then proceeded to Doi Inthanon Mountain Resort (DI), finishing the day strolling around the grounds where we saw Rufous Treepies and two Coppermith Barbets fussing at each other over a woodpecker hole. Although Thailand has about 25 regularly occurring woodpecker species, we only saw a couple of woodpeckers and none of the spectacular species.

The next morning, during a heavy rain, we got to the top of DI, the tallest mountain in Thailand. We birded all day with umbrellas seeing lots of birds at the mountain top including the Yellow-cheeked Tit, Gould's Sunbird, and Green-tailed Sunbird in a flock with warblers and other birds. The sunbirds are fabulous and much prettier even than their pictures in the book.

The next day we birded on top of Doi Poi which is where the Queen has a palace. We saw some more interesting birds like the Streaked Spiderhunter, White-browed Shrike-Babbler, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker. We stopped by a very interesting temple on Doi Suthep on the way back for some shopping before flying back to Bangkok.

We birded for about 5.5 days and saw 225 species, of which 190 were lifers! Thailand is very modern with great roads and accommodations. We can't wait to return!

CHBC Contacts (ph., email) :

- >President: *Joe Bearden*, 884-9050, chickadeebirders@earthlink.net
- >Vice-Pres.(RDU): *Karen Bearden*, 884-9050,
chickadeebirders@earthlink.net
- >Vice-Pres. (Chapel Hill): *Judy Murray*, 942-2985,
jmurray@unc.edu
- >Secretary: *Amalie Tuffin*, 641-8072, amalieta@post.harvard.edu
- >Treasurer: *Ruth Roberson*, 489-4888, ruth-roberson@nc.rr.com
- >Field Trip Chairman: *Doug Shadwick*, 942-0479,
dougshadwick@aol.com
- >Refreshments Chair: *Karen Piplani*, 929-6553,
k_piplani@alumni.unc.edu
- >CHBC webmaster, checklist, and CH Xmas count compiler:
Will Cook, 382-9134, cwcook@duke.edu
- >Newsletter Editor: *Rob Gluck*, 967-3134, thrush@hotmail.com

Will Cook's homepage is an excellent general source of birding and nature-related links/resources:

<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook>

~ Quiz Corner ~

(answers at bottom of page)

Each bird in column A is in the same taxonomic 'family' as one bird listed in column B. Can you match them up correctly (...not easy)?:

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
1 Swallow-tailed Kite	A Fish Crow
2 Blue Jay	B Gray Catbird
3 Yellow-billed Cuckoo	C Kestrel
4 Eastern bluebird	D Osprey
5 Brown Thrasher	E Northern Cardinal
6 La. Waterthrush	F Great Egret
7 Caracara	G Snow Bunting
8 Eastern Towhee	H Wood Thrush
9 Am. Avocet	I Baltimore Oriole
10 Indigo Bunting	J Greater Roadrunner
11 Least Bittern	K Parula Warbler
12 Eastern Meadowlark	L Am. Oystercatcher

~~ Membership Form ~~

(become a member or give a gift membership to a friend!)

Name _____

Address _____

ph _____

email _____

new member: ____ or, renewal: ____

dues: \$15/yr. individuals/family, \$10/yr. students
send checks payable to Chapel Hill Bird Club to:

**Ruth Roberson, 38 Stoneridge Pl., Durham, NC.
27705**

Parting Words...

"What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the Master calls a butterfly." ~ *Richard Bach*

~~~~~  
A HAPPY HOLIDAY & BIRD COUNT  
SEASON TO ALL....  
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Quiz Answers:

family matches: 1D, 2A, 3J, 4H, 5B, 6K, 7C, 8G, 9L, 10E, 11F, 12I

Field trips, counts, meetings/talks, webpage, newsletter, checklists, fun, knowledge... your Chapel Hill Bird Club!