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To:

THE **BULLETIN**... Chapel Hill Bird Club

January 2006 http://chbc.carolinanature.com

Vol. 35

>> NEXT PROGRAM: Monday, Jan. 23

"Sapsuckers, Swainson's Warblers, and an Update on the NC Museum of Natural Sciences"

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.

Who/What: Becky Browning manages a 20,000 bird specimen collection as the Bird Collection Manager at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh. She'll discuss some of what goes on behind the scenes at the Museum, as well as telling about some of the research projects she is involved with including Sapsuckers and Swainson's Warblers -- if that doesn't sound like enough diversity to grab your interest, than you're too hard-to-please!! Join us as we kick off 2006.

~ Saturday Morning Field Trips ~

Local field trips, generally led by Doug "Bottomless-Cup-of-Coffee" 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.

Also call Doug if you're interested in his annual **Martin Luther King birding weekend** (**Jan.14-16**) on the NC coast. Several stops, and always a good variety of birds... and birders. (No local outing that weekend.)

Of Probabilities and Promptness

The majority of CHBC members are due to renew their memberships in January, so *probability* says YOU'RE one of them (but check your mailing label to be sure). (\$15 per yr. or \$10/yr. for students, and you may renew for multiple years if you like -- send to Ruth Roberson's address on page 3.)

And **THANKS** to those folks who have already renewed -- the *promptness* is appreciated!

No. 1

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

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." ~ Aldo Leopold

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYBODY!!!

....and, now for the bad news: according to a recent Earth Policy Institute report about 1 in 8 bird species worldwide are threatened with extinction. Habitat loss and degradation is by far the greatest cause, but there are many other factors. Hunting and capture for the pet trade is listed as the 2nd biggest factor, followed by the often over-looked ill-effects from the introduction of non-native species (both flora and fauna). Pollution and climate change are other potential factors, and additionally, longline fish nets have a major impact on seabirds, while in the US window crashes are the single greatest cause of "incidental death."

Ivory-bill Spotter Bobby Harrison To Speak

Bobby Harrison, one of the first 3 individuals to claim an Ivory-bill sighting in Arkansas' Big Woods for Cornell, is scheduled to speak at the Raleigh Museum of Natural Sciences Auditorium at 7 pm on Sat., Feb. 4. Tickets \$10 for Audubon members and Friends of the Museum. Only 250 seats available. Visit http://www.naturalsciences.org/calendar/february.html to reserve your tickets, or call 733-7450 x307.

Book Look

Got any budding birders in the household? A nice introduction to our avian friends for the novice (or even not-so-novice) birder is **The Secret Lives of Common Birds** by wildlife photographer Marie Read. My bias runs to books dealing with bird behavior and this little volume focuses on just that, covering various behaviors of several common birds, with superb photography to boot.

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

Judy Murray's name often shows up in some capacity with any number of birding and conservation groups in our area now. Judy was born and raised in Alabama where she got a BS in chemistry before marrying and living in Illinois for 3 years, prior to moving to Chapel Hill in 1961. Judy recently completed 13 years of work at UNC but earlier on was a stay-at-home mom, raising 5 children one of whom she credits with sparking her increased enthusiasm for birds. Though she was interested in birds even as a youngster, that interest took off in the early 1990s the first time she saw a White-throated Sparrow through binoculars. In 1994 she joined the New Hope Audubon Chapter and later the Chapel Hill Bird Club, and her birding interest hasn't slowed down since.

Judy mentions Butner Gamelands as a favorite Triangle birding spot. John Sneeden recently put in a plug for this wonderful area, otherwise known as "Brickhouse Road," in a recent post to 'Carolinabirds':

--- "I utilized my day off today to make my first trip out to Brickhouse Road near Falls Lake. I didn't see any rarities, but wanted to give this place a plug for those of you who haven't been out there. In all my years of birding I've never seen a place that is so "sparrowy". I spent most of my time on Loop 3 which is a trail that runs past ponds, impoundments, fields and innumerable hedgerows and thickets. At first things seemed quiet, that is until I made the mistake of pishing. Pishing at this place is the equivalent of stepping on a fire ant hill - once you begin to make noise hordes of sparrows immediately rise up from the depths. The numbers out there are mind-boggling..." ---

As of last year Judy had an ABA life list of 589 and trips to Mexico, Panama, and Trinidad push her world list closer to 1000. The Three-Wattled Bellbird and Resplendent Quetzal of Panama are among her biggest birding thrills, as well as a European Storm-Petrel seen closer to home last year while on a pelagic trip.

Reading and gardening are among Judy's other side interests, and she cites Scott Wiedensaul's **Living on the Wind** as the best bird book she's read thus far (this volume appears on a lot of folks' 'favorites' lists, and as noted in the last newsletter Scott has a new book out now with equally great reviews, **Return To Wild America**).

I think Judy's passion for the pastime may only be surpassed by her modesty, for in her responses to me she failed to mention any of the multiple positions she has held or services rendered to the various groups in which she takes part (including being a Vice-President for CHBC). Every group needs a few Judy Murrays on board happily pitching in to take on more than their share of the responsibilities.

-- A Few Recent Field Notes --

The usual winter waterfowl have been showing up at their normal Triangle haunts for the last month -- Falls Lake, Raleigh Lakes and ponds, RDU ponds. Lake Crabtree is a little more hit-and-miss, but Patrick Murphy found some nice specimens there on Dec. 12, including Canvasbacks, N. Shovelers, Gadwall, GW Teal, and Hooded Mergansers. Jordan Lake, as usual, has been less productive for waterfowl, though in early Dec. Murphy found over 20 Common Loons there.

Another fine find, was a **Rough-legged Hawk** spotted by Doug Shadwick in western Orange County on a CHBC outing Dec. 10. Doug has a knack for finding rarities, and I think this is at least the 3rd Rough-legged he has spotted in the Triangle over a period of years.

Among interesting yard birds were Amalie Tuffin's nuthatch threesome (White-breasted, Red-breasted, and Brown-headed) all appearing in her yard on Dec. 12. And once again this winter Lena Gallitano has at least one Rufous Hummingbird and a half-dozen or more Baltimore Orioles coming to her Raleigh yard.

On Dec. 20, Tom Krakauer reported a single **Red Crossbill** at Ebenezer Pt., Lake Jordan, and 5 days later S. Phukan heard at least two at Johnston's Mill Preserve off Sinai Rd. There were several nice finds on the local Christmas counts, but those will show up in a future issue.

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Chatham County Fall Report

Will Cook compiled the following summary of results from last fall's Chatham County bird count (tabular data attached at end).

The 10th Chatham County Fall Migration Count on 9/17/2005, was a hot one, but thanks to the drought and therefore the mudflats on Jordan Lake, we had a great showing of shorebirds and a fantastic count! As good as the shorebirding was, the tyrant-flycatchers stole the show.

We totalled 114 species, well above the average of 100 and just one shy of the record 115 set in 1999. The individual count was a near-normal 3728 birds (3446 average). Observer effort was good, with a near-average number of parties and party-hours. This year's 54.4 birds per party-hour was a bit above the average 51.7. For comparison, we average about 67 birds/party-hour on Chapel Hill Spring counts and 107 on Christmas counts.

Unlike the last two years, there was no tropical storm this year, but we managed to find some goodies without the storm assistance. Of the four species were new to the count, three of them were found by Jeff Pippen alone! Jeff had great luck with his favorite family, the Tyrranidae, and managed to get our first Olive-sided Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, and Willow Flycatcher for the count, all of which were both seen and heard! Jeff posted details of his sightings (and hearings) on Carolinabirds. We had a silent Traill's Flycatcher before (the old name before Willow and Alder were split), but never one that announced its name. Fortunately for us, the flycatchers felt like sounding off this day. Jeff also scooped up two other rare tyrranids - a heard only Yellowbellied Flycatcher and an Eastern Kingbird, both second count records. Steve Shultz also found a species new to the count, though I bet he wasn't quite as excited about it - his lone Herring Gull was our only gull of the count. Doug Shadwick and Jacob Socolar, covering the New Hope Creek and Morgan Creek mudflats, found a number of rarish species, including 4 Northern Shovelers, 5 Black-crowned Night-Herons, 50 Pectoral Sandpipers, and 12 Stilt Sandpipers - all 2nd count records. Steve Shultz also saw some of these same shorebirds and more from his boat. Will Cook had two (seen and heard) Acadian Flycatchers, also a second count record, and our fourth Philadelphia Vireo. Another rarity for the count was Bobolink. We've had a grand total of one on all our previous counts, but this year three parties had 5 Bobolinks.

We set an incredible 20 record highs, mostly shorebirds: Northern Bobwhite (24, average 2), Black-crowned Night-Heron (5, avg 0.1), Turkey Vulture (180, avg 94), Semipalmated Plover (6, avg 0.2), Killdeer (147, avg 29), Greater Yellowlegs (9, avg 0.3), Spotted Sandpiper (5, avg 1.3), Semipalmated Sandpiper (16, avg 0.8), Western Sandpiper (4, avg 0.2), Least Sandpiper (32, avg 1.7), Pectoral

Sandpiper (50, avg 2.0), Stilt Sandpiper (12, avg 0.2), Ruby-throated Hummingbird (20, avg 10), Red-headed Woodpecker (41, avg 16), Acadian Flycatcher (2, avg 0.1), Northern Mockingbird (29, avg 17), Yellow-throated Warbler (8, avg 1.6), Palm Warbler (16, avg 3.6), Blue Grosbeak (32, avg 13), and Bobolink (5, avg 0.1). Only two record lows this time: House Finch (5, avg 13), and a big miss, Field Sparrow (0, avg 14). Warblers were a little below average, with 17 species and 294 individuals (111 non-Pines, average 137), but shorebirds more than made up for them, with 11 species (our record is 12 in 1998) and a record 298 individuals (131 non-Killdeer, average 12). And of course tyrant-flycatchers had an astounding showing, with a record-

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CHBC Contacts (ph., email):

>President: Joe Bearden, 884-9050, chickadeebirders@earthlink.net >Vice-Pres.(RDU): Karen Bearden, 884-9050,

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>Vice-Pres. (Chapel Hill): Judy Murray, 942-2985,

shattering 9 species (previous best 5) and 48 individuals.

jmurray@unc.edu

>Secretary: Amalie Tuffin, 641-8072, amaliet@post.harvard.edu >Treasurer: Ruth Roberson, 489-4888, ruth-roberson@nc.rr.com

>Field Trip Chairman: Doug Shadwick, 942-0479,

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>Refreshments Chair: Karen Piplani, 929-6553,

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>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

~~ 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. ************

~ Ouiz Corner ~

(answers at bottom of page)

We've all heard of a "gaggle" of geese or a "covey" of quail, but can you match up the "aggregation" terms on the left below with the birds they describe on the right:

a parliament of a larks a flight of b woodcocks a murmuration of c finches an ostentation of d starlings 5 a fall of e owls 6 an exaltation of f crows 7 a charm of g teal 8 a spring of h pheasants 9 a congress of i swallows 10 a bouquet of j peacocks

And Just For Fun...

Here are just a few of the UN-official bird aggregations that various folks on the internet have proposed:

- a shiver of penguins
- a herd of cowbirds
- a gallon of petrels
- a pack of larks
- a marathon of roadrunners
- a scaffold of ladder-backed Woodpeckers
- a sorority of redheads
- a ballet of nutcrackers
- a confusion of Empidonax flycatchers
- a gulp of swallows
- a brief of pelicans
- a blizzard of snowy owls

-- Space-filling Factoid --

According to David Bird's The Bird Almanac, the world's most abundant wild bird is the Red-billed Quelea, a small African songbird which may number close to 100 billion, and is a devastating agricultural

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Parting Words...

"Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes." ~ Thoreau

Quiz Answers:

matches: 1 e, 2 i, 3 d, 4 j, 5 b, 6 a, 7 c, 8 g, 9 f, 10 h

2005 CHATHAM COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT

Species	9/17	ovlp	notes	NB	WC	TL	JP	JR	BR	DS	SS	AT	AU	$\mathbf{R}\mathbf{W}$
Canada Goose	24								2	2				20
Wood Duck	28				15			5		2		6		
American Black Duck	1									1				
Mallard	56	9			2			23		22	9	2		7
Blue-winged Teal	19				3			16						
Northern Shoveler	4		R							4				
Wild Turkey	1									1				
Northern Bobwhite	24		Н				22			2				
Double-crested Cormorant	140	189		100	112		1	2	13	6	92	3		
Great Blue Heron	110	15		4	45	1	1	4	16	33	14	6	1	
Great Egret	175	49			40				9	116	57	1		1
Black-crowned Night-Heron	5	.,	R,H							5				
Green Heron	2		11,11				1							1
Black Vulture	31				7		-	2				1	13	8
Turkey Vulture	180	11	Н		12	1	8	25	62	2	8	39		11
Osprey	9	- 11		2	2		Ü	2	1		1	1	23	- 11
Bald Eagle 6 ad., 9 imm.	15		$\vdash \vdash \vdash$	1	4			1	2	5	2	1		
Cooper's Hawk	5		$\vdash \vdash$		1			2		<i>J</i>			1	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	8		$\vdash \vdash \vdash$		1		2	2		1			3	1
Red-tailed Hawk	7						1			1	1	1	3	1
American Kestrel	3						1				1	1	3	1
Semipalmated Plover	6	5	Н							6	5			
Killdeer	147	20			15			2		125	24		1	
Greater Yellowlegs	9	1	-		13					9	1		- 1	
Lesser Yellowlegs	15	4	_		2					13	4			
Solitary Sandpiper	2			1						13	1			
Spotted Sandpiper	5		Н					1		4				
Semipalmated Sandpiper	16	2						1		2	16			
Western Sandpiper	4	3								4	3			
Least Sandpiper	32	7			2					30	7			
Pectoral Sandpiper	50	36								50	36			
Stilt Sandpiper	12	2								12	2			
Herring Gull	1		NC							12	1			
Forster's Tern	5	5			5						5			
Rock Pigeon	18				13						5	5		
Mourning Dove	109			8	2	14	6	3	8	13	1	8	34	12
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	5			- 0	2	1	0	3	- 0	13	1	0	2	12
Eastern Screech-Owl	3				2	1								
Great Horned Owl	1					1							1	
Barred Owl	3			1	1								1	1
Whip-poor-will	4			1	1					4				1
Chimney Swift	91			1	9	9	5		6	17	8	15	18	3
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	20		Н	2	1	4	3		1	1/	0	3		2
Belted Kingfisher	16		п	$-\frac{2}{2}$	3	4	1		2	3	2	5	0	
Red-headed Woodpecker	41		Н	-	3		2		2	20		13		1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	41		п	3		3	3	1	11	4		11	3	2
Downy Woodpecker	38		\vdash	4	10	2	1	3	8	4	2	2	3	2
Hairy Woodpecker	11		\vdash	1	3	1	1	1	ð	2		2		
Northern Flicker	14		$\vdash\vdash\vdash$	4	3	1	3	1	1	4				
Pileated Woodpecker	11			4	1	1	3	1	2	4	1	4	1	1
	11		NC		1	1	1				1	4	1	1
Olive-sided Flycatcher Eastern Wood-Pewee	21		INC		3	4	1	5	1	2		1		1
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			R			4	1	3	1	3		1		4
	1			-	2		1							
Acadian Flycatcher	2		R,H		2		1							
Alder Flycatcher	j 1		NC				1							

2005 CHATHAM COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT

Species	9/17	ovlp	notes	NB	wc	TL	JP	JR	BR	DS	SS	AT	AU	RW
Willow Flycatcher	1		NC				1							
Eastern Phoebe	18			3	2	1	3			3	2	3	1	
Great Crested Flycatcher	2				1								1	
Eastern Kingbird	1		R				1							
White-eyed Vireo	19				1	5	4			1		5	3	
Blue-headed Vireo	1			1			•							
Yellow-throated Vireo	5					1		1						3
Philadelphia Vireo	1		R		1									
Red-eyed Vireo	24			2	7	6	1		3			3		2
Blue Jay	133			7	12	12	20	4	11	15		22	22	8
American Crow	206			13	20	16	60	9	4	30	3	28	17	6
Fish Crow	8			13	20	10	00	,	6	30	2	20	1 /	U
Tree Swallow	2								0	2				
	178			9	55	9	20	12	23	17	5	24	2	2
Carolina Chickadee					51	7	20		20		6	31		2
Tufted Titmouse	199		-	16			38	8		15	0			7
White-breasted Nuthatch	34		\vdash	6	2	3	6	3	3	3	1	3	2	3
Brown-headed Nuthatch	63			20	7		10	4	4	6	1	11		
Carolina Wren	201			5	51	8	36	6	30		2	27	8	11
House Wren	2		-		1					1				
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	25			9	1	6		2	2	1	1	1	2	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1				1									
Eastern Bluebird	40			1	4		9	4	1	7		3	6	5
Wood Thrush	2				1	1								
American Robin	9						6			1				2
Gray Catbird	4					2						1		1
Northern Mockingbird	29		Н	2	2	1	2		1			3	14	4
Brown Thrasher	8						1		2	1		2		2
European Starling	13						3							10
Tennessee Warbler	1				1									
Northern Parula	9			3	1	3			1					1
Yellow Warbler	1									1				
Chestnut-sided Warbler	3			2	1									
Magnolia Warbler	8				7							1		
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1					1								
Blackburnian Warbler	1										1			
Yellow-throated Warbler	8		Н	2	5	1								
Pine Warbler	183			40	21	7	30	18	12	20	4	27	2	2
Prairie Warbler	1				1									
Palm Warbler	16		Н	7			1	2		6				
Black-and-white Warbler	8			2		3				2		1		
American Redstart	18				8	5			2			2		1
Ovenbird	3					1				2				
Northern Waterthrush	2				1					1				
Common Yellowthroat	29				5	8				15				1
Hooded Warbler	2					2				10				
Summer Tanager	21			1	8		3	1		3		2	1	2
Scarlet Tanager	18				5	1	3	1		3		9	1	
Eastern Towhee	25		$\vdash\vdash\vdash$		3	2	3		7	2		6	1	1
	13		\vdash	1	1		6		/			U	1	5
Chipping Sparrow	0) A	1	1		0							3
Field Sparrow Northern Cardinal	125		M	4	1.5	17	20		17	8		12	9	16
			\vdash	4	15	17	20	6	17	8		13	9	10
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	22				1.0	1	1			10				
Blue Grosbeak	32		Н	1	16					10			5	
Indigo Bunting	75	-			48					15		6		6
Bobolink	5		R,H	2	2					1				

2005 CHATHAM COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT

Species	9/17	ovlp	notes	NB	WC	TL	JP	JR	BR	DS	SS	AT	\mathbf{AU}	$\mathbf{R}\mathbf{W}$
Red-winged Blackbird	50				50									
Common Grackle	150						150							
Baltimore Oriole	1				1									
House Finch	5		L						5					
American Goldfinch	72				9	11	2	4	6	5	1	27	4	3
TOTAL SPECIES	114	15		37	69	41	45	34	37	64	36	45	32	41
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	3728	358		291	759	184	501	185	307	743	331	390	213	182
Motor II - Doggad High I - D	Notes: H = Board High I = Board Low NC = Now to Count D = Bore only = estimated everlan													

Notes: H = Record High, L = Record Low, NC = New to Count, R = Rare

ovlp = estimated overlap

Weather: temp 73-95F, wind W 0-15mph, no precip, sunny, lake level 213.8'

Start	600	625	700	645	715	800	645	600	930		600	630
End	1930	1045	1630	1930	1530	1400	1200	1530	1200		1900	1915
Parties	11	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Individuals	18	2	2	1	1	5	1	2	1	1	1	1
Regular Party Hours: Total	68.5	4.3	9	8	6	6	5.2	9	2.5	6	6	6.5
Party Hours: On Foot	59	4.3	8.5	7.5	5	5	4.2	9		5	4	6.5
Party Hours: By Car	7		0.5	0.5	1	1	1			1	2	
Party Hours: By Boat	2.5								2.5			
Party Miles: Total	127	1	11	10	25	12	15	7	10	12	22	2
Party Miles: On Foot	33	1	6	3	3	2	5	7		2	2	2
Party Miles: By Car	84		5	7	22	10	10			10	20	
Party Miles: By Boat	10								10			
Owling Hours	2.5	0.3						0.5			1	0.7
Owling Miles	0.75	0						0.25			0.5	0

Area	Party	Party Members
Vista Point, Seaforth	NB	Norm Budnitz, Patsy Bailey
751 bridge area, Wildlife Observation Site	WC	Will Cook, Tom Krakauer
Bynum Ridge yard area	TL	Terry Logue
Harris Lake, Cape Fear River	JP	Jeff Pippen
Ebenezer Point, Poplar Point, Horton Pond	JR	Josh Rose, Brenner family (4)
Farrington Point, Crosswinds Marina	BR	Bob Rybczynski
Old Hope Valley Farm Rd.	DS	Doug Shadwick, Jacob Socolar
Open water of Jordan from US64 to New Hope Cr.	SS	Steve Shultz
Big Woods Road	AT	Amalie Tuffin
Jay Shambley Rd, Carolina Hill Rd., etc.	AU	Andy Upshaw
NW Pittsboro	RW	Rouse Wilson

Past Counts

i ust counts											
Year	1996	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Date	9/14	9/21	9/20	9/19	9/18	9/16	9/15	9/21	9/20	9/18	9/17
Species	86	84	99	107	115	107	103	95	98	96	114
Birds	1313	1584	3125	3805	4609	3887	4895	3471	3381	2256	3728
Parties	5	7	10	12	13	13	17	9	13	10	11
Counters	5	13	14	19	27	23	37	14	17	12	18
Party Hours	26.5	31.3	54	70	86.7	88.3	132	53.8	67.3	42.3	68.5
Birds per Hour	49.5	50.7	57.9	54.4	53.2	44	37.1	64.6	50.3	53.3	54.4