

c/o R. Gluck, 451 Melanie Ct.
Chapel Hill, NC. 27514
thrush@hotmail.com



THE BULLETIN...
Chapel Hill Bird Club
November/December 2006
<http://chbc.carolinanature.com>

To :

Vol. 35

No. 8

>> **Upcoming Meeting : Monday, Nov. 27**
-- " Birds of Bhutan " --

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

"And on the fifth day God created birds (days 1-4 must've been a real drag)."

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.

~ from old Leitz binocular ad

====> **IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Binkley Church will be undergoing some construction for the next couple of months and have requested that as many folks as possible **please park in the University Mall parking lot** behind the church and walk to building; if walking or accessibility is difficult for you there will still be some spots next to the church, which you may need to follow signs to find.

Christmas Bird Counts A'comin'

Next month 'tis the season... for counting birds, and opportunities in the Triangle abound -- ol' timers know the ropes; if you're new to the area or a novice and want to join in contact one (or more!) of the folks listed below to learn where you can help:

Who/What: Lena Gallitano returns to give us another birding presentation, this time transporting us to the friendly, exotic Asian kingdom of Bhutan, where she saw 200+ bird species. Travel-holics and bird-a-holics alike won't want to miss this one.

December 16 - Raleigh Christmas Bird Count
contact: John Connors, john.connors@ncmail.net 755-0253

December 17 - Durham CBC
contact: Mike Schultz, ross.gull@verizon.net 490-6761

December 24 - Chapel Hill CBC
contact: Will Cook, cwcook@duke.edu 382-9134

Saturday Morning Field Trips

December 31 - Jordan Lake CBC
contact: Carol Williamson, cncbrdr@yahoo.com 383-2364

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.

January 3, 2007 - Falls Lake CBC and
January 4, 2007 - Kerr Lake CBC
contact: Brian Bockhahn, cbockhahn4@earthlink.net 676-1027

(Note: **No outings** the Sat. following Thanksgiving, nor the *last 3 Sats. of December* during Christmas count period.)

With the Chapel Hill count falling on Xmas weekend I imagine Will can use all the extra help/counters he can get this year. *Also note:* the Club pays the fees for the counts, but anyone who wishes to support the count may do so by sending a check to Treasurer Patsy Bailey, and designating it for the Christmas count fund (make out to CHBC). Thanks.

---> **Advance Notice:** I assume there will be the usual weekend outing to the Outer Banks over Martin Luther King weekend in Jan. (13-15th). Call Doug for more info (next newsletter notice won't be 'til Jan. issue).

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

**** Kleanup Kudos ****

Thanks to Jane Brinkley, Judy Murray, David Welch, another Jane (?), and leader Doug Shadwick for working to clean up litter on Old Hope Valley Rd. one Saturday in October. This is a yearly endeavor that combines good deeds and good birding along one of our favorite corridors in Chatham County.

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

Monica Nees is another long time Club member and a past Club President. Raised in Illinois she didn't develop her interest in birds until moving to N.C. and taking a birding class with Bob Teulings in the mid 1970s. At that point she joined CHBC.

In those earlier days her favorite spot for birding was Hogan's Lake, which many "ol' timers" have fond memories of before it was developed. Now Monica lists Mason Farm and the 751 bridge over Jordan Lake (where she participates in New Hope Audubon's quarterly bald eagle counts) as favored locales.

One of her favorite birds is the bubbly Carolina Wren. She also has a special fondness for Bobolinks which she studied for her master's research at Ohio State, developing a successful management plan for re-introducing the species to Metro Park in Columbus. In her spare time Monica enjoys swimming, reading, and visiting friends around the country. She's worked in a lot of different fields ("about nine careers" by her estimation) and currently works at EPA involved with scientific protocols for human research studies... but says she is "still hoping to find the perfect job in non-game bird management."

I'm always happy when profilees mention reading material I've not heard of, or not commonly mentioned here, and so it is with Monica citing Richard Nelson's "The Island Within" as a favorite read, noting it is "not a birding book, but an all-around nature and philosophical one."

And finally, Monica recalled two special birding thrills from the past: one was leading a hike at Mason Farm in the 70's and at the end looking up to see an adult bald eagle "flying about 20 feet over my head;" a very rare, maybe first-time, event back in those days for this area... and quite the way to end a hike! On another occasion, during a trip to Maine, Monica hiked a cliff and watched dozens of Herring Gulls soaring overhead when one landed next to her (within arm's reach) and proceeded to go to sleep. Monica herself took a catnap only to find the gull still comfortably beside her upon awakening. Given the right circumstance, in the bird world, one person's 'trash' bird can be another's 'sleeping beauty.'

Membership Renewals Around the Corner

A majority of Club members have expiration dates come due in January, so if your mailing label says "Jan 07," while you're sending out all of those end-of-year charitable donations, please be sure to set aside \$15 for the Bird Club and send in to Treasurer Patsy Bailey. Thanks....

Patsy Bailey, 277 Mint Springs Rd., Pittsboro, NC 27312

-- Falls Lake Fall Count Results --

(edited from count compiler Brian Bockhahn's report)

There were 15 counters in 8 parties for the first annual Fall Count at Falls Lake. The east side of the lake had a great fallout of birds. In nine years of counting I have never spent so much time counting while traveling such a little distance, only 1 mile in over five hours! Tanagers, Grosbeaks and a myriad of warblers were just dropping out of the trees at Sandling Beach.

Species total was 84 species and we tallied 2,174 birds. Two more species were reported during the count week Solitary Sandpiper and Caspian Tern. In the rare bird department the only write in was a Willow Flycatcher seen and heard at the Highway 50 boat ramp, right where I've seen the species the past two springs!?! Four Acadian Flycatchers were recorded in the Holly Point areas.

A Few Field Notes

A possible N.C. first-ever Bell's Vireo was spotted and photographed on the coast at the end of September. The state records committee will be voting on the identification in upcoming weeks.

G. Gordon Brown reported a lone Red Phalarope off Ebenezer Pt. at Jordan Lake on Oct 10.

The Scissortail Flycatchers that bred in Southern Pines this summer were still being seen at the end of October.

-- Birding AdVentures --

If you're looking for some exciting birding farther afield be sure and check out Simon Thompson's "Ventures" birding tours which are based in N.C. but travel all over the country... and world. On the Web at:

<http://www.birdventures.com/>

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Winter Hummer Watch

The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are long gone, but nonetheless it's that time of year to keep a fresh hummingbird feeder going in your yard and Susan Campbell's phone no. by your phone (910-949-3207 or email: susan@ncaves.com). Susan studies the growing phenomena of overwintering (western species) hummers in N.C. If you spot one in your yard let her know, pronto.

Poetry Corner

The following rather timely poem, entitled "An Optimistic Birder's Prayer" (author unknown) just ran in the New Hope Audubon newsletter, and was found in the belongings of Ellen Spalt upon her death back in May 2000. It has been shared by her son, Carrboro conservationist Alan Spalt:

Oh Lord, who helps the battle tossed,
Hear my prayers on bended knee,
Send me a Bachman's Warbler, please.

I took a trip way out yonder
And saw a California Condor.
I ask to see, before I go
The Curlew, first name Eskimo.

I mind the time when things were dull
You sent us down a Ross' Gull.
Now, before my voice is stilled,
Let me see see an Ivory-billed!

....Speaking of Which

The search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker continues in earnest this winter, both officially and unofficially in several states throughout its former range, where rumors continue to surface. One local, Dr. Greg Lewbart, a veterinarian at NCSU, will be part of the Auburn team keeping close watch along the Choctawhatchee River in the Florida panhandle. Good luck Greg, and really, really good birding!!

Your 15 Minutes (or less) of Fame:

Brownbag Productions, producers of DVDs for naturalists, is looking for individuals to be interviewed (very informal and painless interview) for an upcoming DVD project about birders and their experiences. All age groups needed. Please contact: Greg Dodge, cbirdpro@ix.netcom.com, brownbagproductions.com., 919-643-2740.

Birds of North America

If you're not already familiar with it, one of the best, most comprehensive sources for information on N. American bird species is the "The Birds of North America Online" website run through Cornell's Lab of Ornithology. Available here:

<http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/BNA/>

Full access to the site requires a subscription, but there is also much free information.

Book Corner

If you're in the mood for something a bit different from the usual bird adventure book or academic field guide then just maybe this new volume from Andrew Blechman will fill the bill: **Pigeons: The Fascinating Saga of the World's Most Revered and Reviled Bird**. The title sort of says it all.

Bird-by-bird Gardening by Sally Roth is yet another 'how-to' book for attracting birds to your own backyard; looks well-organized, very instructive, and nice pictures; another addition to the many good choices in this genre.

And for fans of artist/writer Julie Zickefoose, her first book-length volume, **Letters From Eden**, is now widely available, a compendium of excellent nature essays and illustrations from this popular contributor to **Birdwatcher's Digest**.

Quick, Count 'em Up

Want some prep for the upcoming Christmas counts? The following internet site gives you some practice counting flocks of flying birds. Kind of fun. Don't be put off by the foreign language, and be forewarned the site/game takes awhile to initially load:

<http://personal.inet.fi/cool/live/birds/index.html>

Birding Continues to Go High Tech

"The National Geographic Handheld Birds" is a North American field guide (including calls) in multimedia, 'user-friendly' digital PDA form. Personally, I'll stick with a well-worn Peterson, but no doubt this is the shape of things to come. Look for it in a store or online.

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What Might Chapel Hill Be???

The following are some of the bird labels adopted by various American cities as reported in an internet posting:

- "Duck Capital of America" -- Gueydan, LA.
- "Eagle Capital of America" -- Haines, AK.
- "Hummingbird Capital of the United States" -- Sierra Vista, AZ.
- "Prairie Chicken Capital of the World" -- Cassoday, KS.
- "Purple Martin Capital of the World" -- Griggsville, IL.
- "Red Tail Hawk Capital" -- Kaufman, TX.
- "Ruffed Grouse Capital of the World" -- Park Falls, WI.
- "Turkey Capital of the World" -- Cuero, TX.
- "Wild Goose Capital of the World" -- Sumner, MO.
- "Loon Capital of the World" -- Mercer, WI.

(I think Chapel Hill just may be the Carolina Wren capital of the world, though I suspect if a certain former NC Senator had his way Chapel Hill just might steal Mercer, Wisconsin's designation from above!)

Any Writer Wannabes...?

I'm looking in advance for others who might be interested in editing this *Bulletin*. Time constraints will likely make it impractical for me to stay on as editor after this season (ending next summer), and I'll be looking for someone to take over next fall. The newsletter is fairly straightforward (and fun) to do in present form (and there's lots of room to 'fancy it up' if you have the desire and computer skills). Let me know if this interests you!

I'll also take a moment here to again nudge anyone who has something of interest to contribute to the newsletter, from exotic birding travelogues to quirky local anecdotes, to book or equipment reviews, go ahead and send it in (preferably pasted into an email and < 500 words).

==> No meeting (or newsletter) in December, so wishing you all in advance Happy Holidays and successful bird counts!

~~ Membership Form ~~

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:

Patsy Bailey, 277 Mint Springs Rd., Pittsboro, NC 27312

CHBC Contacts (ph., email) :

- >President: *Ruth Roberson*, 489-4888, ruth-roberson@nc.rr.com
(Immediate Past Pres. : *Joe Bearden*, 844-9050)
- >Vice-Pres.(RDU): *Karen Bearden*, 844-9050,
chickadeebirders@earthlink.net
- >Vice-Pres. (Chapel Hill): *Ginger Travis*, 942-7746,
ginger_travis@bellsouth.net
- >Secretary: *Amalie Tuffin*, 641-8072, amaliet@post.harvard.edu
- >Treasurer: *Patsy Bailey*, 933-5850, pbailey@fhi.org
- >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 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 (and also the place to learn about 'Carolinabirds' internet listserv group):
<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook>

Parting Words...

"Some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue."

~ *Anonymous*

answers to 'Scrambled Birds' :

- 1. condor 2. redpoll 3. curlew 4. flamingo 5. titmouse 6. magpie
- 7. spoonbill 8. wigeon

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