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



## <u>To</u>:

# THE BULLETIN... Chapel Hill Bird Club

September 2007

http://chbc.carolinanature.com

*Vol.* 35

### New CHBC Season Underway...

>> Upcoming Meeting: Monday, Sept. 24
-- "American Oystercatchers" --

**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:** Shiloh Schulte will tell us about the ecology of one of our most striking shorebirds, American Oystercatchers, which he has been studying since 2003 (currently at NCSU). Go here on the Web if you wish to preview his work:

http://www.shilohandshevaun.com/Research.htm

## Saturday Morning Field Trips and....

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.

*IMPORTANT*: there will be **no** regular outing on SEPT. 15 or SEPT. 22. The 15th is the day of the **Chatham County Fall Migration Count** -- to take part, or for more info contact Will Cook 919-949-3678.

Sept. 22-3 is the yearly weekend outing to the **Blue Ridge Parkway** for Fall hawks and warblers. Again, call Will to reserve a spot or for more info (free for Club members, \$15 for non-members).

Good News, Grrrreat News

Good news: Bird Club member/officer Karen Piplani retired from her job recently, which brings the GREAT news that she is able to take over as editor of this *Bulletin*, possibly as soon as the next issue! ...which just might free up enough time for me to get back to doing some birding again!!

No. 6

THANKS Karen, and if you see her offer congratulations, and any thoughts/ideas you have for forthcoming *Bulletins*.

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# **Membership List Updated!**

The Chapel Hill Bird Club mailing list was updated over the summer, deleting those no longer currently paid up in their dues, sooooo... if you're NOT reading this right now, but **wish** you were; -), you may have been dropped from the rolls, and need to contact Patsy Bailey to renew your membership.

~~	Membership	<b>Form</b>	~~
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Name
Address
<u>ph</u>
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

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

Amalie Tuffin only started birding in the year 2000 and has been a member of CHBC since 2001, spending almost half that time as a Club officer! She comes our way via Massachusetts thanks to a comedian named Bob Smith! She says she was reading a book by Smith that included a section on birding in Central Park which inspired her to buy a cheap pair of binoculars and go for a park walk herself, after which she was hooked.

Some of her favorite local birding spots are the Big Woods Rd. area of Jordan Lake, Lick Creek area of Falls Lake, and S. Lowell Rd. area in Durham. Pileated Woodpeckers and Cedar Waxwings (how's that for a study in contrast) are among her favorite local birds, and just this summer she picked up a wish-list bird soaring overhead in Florida: the Magnificent Frigatebird.

She enjoys reading and among her favorites, birdingwise, is Marie Winn's wonderful account of NY city's world-famous Red-tailed Hawks, "Red-tails In Love." Her professional life is as an attorney practicing corporate, securities, and tax law. Like a lot of folks I run into these days, Amalie is also heavily into genealogy. Her family hails from Newfoundland and she has created a database on about 85,000 individuals from the Notre Dame area of Newfoundland, which she constantly adds to and shares with other interested parties.

As far as a 'greatest birding' thrill' she mentions spending hours at Max Patch one day looking without any luck for a lifer Golden-winged Warbler. Then the very next day stopping at an overlook along the Blue Ridge Parkway north of Asheville and looking down at the rocks below a waterfall -- there, sitting "pretty as a picture" was her Golden-winged! Ain't that the way it always happens.

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# -- 2007 Area Spring Bird Counts --

CHAPEL HILL (from Will Cook):

The cool, drizzly 2007 Chapel Hill spring count on May 5 recorded an excellent 127 species and 9824 individual birds (10-year average 123.5 species, 11153 birds). This was the second highest species count for us in the last 18 years. Though a little below average in number of individuals, this was mostly due to the below average participation -- the 68.2 birds per party-hour is near the average of 69.6.

Snowy Egret was the rarest find on the count, only our second. Ginger Travis's team and Jacob Socolar, covering different arms of Jordan Lake by canoe, reported one Snowy each, Ginger from the Morgan Creek arm, and Jacob from the New Hope Creek arm. It's possible there was only one bird, but we cannot know for sure. There was an outstanding array of other goodies -- an American Black Duck at Mason Farm (Will Cook's party), 2 Hooded Mergansers at Jordan Lake (Socolar), 2

Common Loons at Jordan Lake (Travis), Little Blue Heron at Jordan Lake (Amalie Tuffin and Shelley Theye), Black-crowned Night-Heron (Travis), Northern Harrier (Cook), Lesser Yellowlegs at Mason Farm and the wastewater plant on Farrington Road (Cook and Nathan Swick), Semipalmated Sandpiper at Mason Farm (Cook), 4 Forster's Terns at Jordan Lake (Travis), White-crowned Sparrow on Dairyland Road (Derb Carter), and Blue-winged, Cape May, and Blackburnian Warblers (Tuffin party). Hooded Mergansers nested in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake this spring -scouting before the count, Jacob Socolar found 5 young with 1 adult. The nesting Yellow-crowned Night-Herons in Durham (Mike Schultz) were present during count week, but missed on count day.

As usual, we set a few record highs: 81 Wood Ducks (77 in 2002), 27 Bald Eagles (25 in 2006), 34 Pileated Woodpeckers (33 in 2002), 119 Black-throated Blue Warblers (114 in 2003), 59 Song Sparrows (57 in 2006), 41 Orchard Orioles (33 in 1979). I reduced the total of Bald Eagles by 15 to account for probable overlap in adjacent areas. Other unusually abundant species included Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers, Belted Kingfisher, Barn Swallow, Yellow Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak (10 at Shelley Theye's feeder!).

We missed Northern Bobwhite for the second year in a row -- only our third miss ever, continuing the trend. Other unusually scarce birds included Green Heron (lowest since 1972), Rock Pigeon (lowest since 1975), Chimney Swift (lowest since 1974), European Starling (lowest since 1974), and Indigo Bunting (lowest since 1984).

This year honors for highest species count and individual count both go to the team of Amalie Tuffin and Shelley Theye, who covered the Big Woods Road area near Jordan Lake. They found 88 species, 931 individuals, and were followed by the teams led by Doug Shadwick (86 species, Jordan Lake area) and Will Cook (85 species, Mason Farm).

Weather in brief: low 55 F, high 66 F; wind N 0-5 mph; cloudy; light rain.

Thanks to the 44 participants for helping make this another fun count!

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#### JORDAN LAKE (from Norm Budnitz):

May 6, 2007, started out as a fairly typical spring day weather-wise. At 5:30 AM the sky was overcast, the temperature was 60 °F, and there was no wind. The clouds broke a bit by mid-morning, but then the winds picked up—20 mph, gusting to 30. By noon, the temperature had climbed to 70 °F. A pleasant enough day, but the winds made birding by ear difficult.

We only had 39 observers in 18 parties in the field this year, the fewest since the early 1990s, which means that our coverage of the count circle left out some key

areas. We tallied 6,487 individual birds (much lower than our 10-year average: 8,643), but we did identify 126 species (right on our 10-year average: 126), during 111 party hours in the field (10-year average: 146).

Perhaps the rarest bird of the day was a Peregrine Falcon, reported by Barbara Coffman, Kyle Mills, and Micky Mills. This is only the second time this species has been recorded on our count, the previous report being one bird in 1984! Needless to say, Barbara, Kyle and Micky were justifiably thrilled with their find. Other species of note: 2 Ring-necked Ducks (Will Cook and Kent Fiala); 2 Red-breasted Mergansers (1 by Tom Krakauer, Lynn Richardson, and Mike Schultz, and 1 by Phil Warren); 2 Pied-billed Grebes (1 by Will and Kent, and 1 by Shelley Theye, who couldn't make the count this year, but saw one as she was passing through the area); 1 Northern Harrier (Patrick Coin, Marty Girolami, and Susan McIntyre); and 5 Wilson's Snipe (Anne Geer, Andy Upshaw, Rouse Wilson). Each of these species has been seen once or a just a few times in the past 10 years.

Krakauer, Richardson, and Schultz found 9 sandpipers at Ebenezer Point in the midst of a very large number of motorcyclists and their roaring and rumbling motorcycles. The birds were obviously quite exhausted and allowed for a very close approach. Too close, actually. Tom, Carol, and Mike identified them as Pectorals because of their apparent large size and bright yellow legs. But when Patrick Coin went back after lunch and photographed the same birds (presumably), it was clear from his photos that they were Least Sandpipers. The tricks the mind can play under unusual circumstances! Special thanks to Patrick for his photos and his persistence in getting the correct ID.

As has often been the case in recent years, we generated new record high counts for several species: 170 Great Blue Herons (previous high was 139 in 2005), 53 Black Vultures (42 in 2003), 46 Ospreys (45 in 2002), and a stunning 54 Bald Eagles (34 in 2001). Were there really that many Ospreys and Eagles? Most observers included the times of their sightings and whether the Eagles were immatures or adults, as requested (and appreciated), and your faithful compiler did his best to identify possible overlapping reports. To be honest, since these birds are fairly wide-ranging in their movements up and down the lake, I don't really think there were that many But even taking the most conservative approach in analyzing the numbers, I cannot justify reporting fewer birds. This will always be a problem for bird counts like these. If any of you have suggestions for practical ways to get more accurate results, I'd appreciate your input.

Some species that were missed this year: American Kestrel, Great Horned Owl, Magnolia and Black-throated Green Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Swamp Sparrow.

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FALLS LAKE (from Brian Bockhahn):

The fourth Falls Lake Spring Bird Count was held on May 1, 2007 under mostly sunny skies and perfect

temperatures, 64-86 degrees. A record high total of19 participants in 12 parties found a record total of 120 species (with three more species recorded during count week). This smashed our 2006 record of 112.

Highlights were numerous; probably the most impressive was a well photographed female COMMON GÔLDENEYE at a private pond north of Beaverdam Lake, talk about lost. On May 4 there was a count week COMMON MOORHEN in the same pond. Patagonia Rest Stop Syndrome!

FIRST RECORDS: Semipalmated Sandpiper Rollingview, Veery at Rollingview, Savannah Sparrows Wake Forest (hopefully will become regular somewhere), Common Raven at the US1 quarry (might they stay to breed?!), Hooded Merganser at north end of Beaverdam Lake, Loggerhead Shrike near Camp Kanata (please breed), Blackpoll Warblers Rollingview and Sandling Beach and hopefully becoming more regular Kentucky Warbler along Lick Creek.

SECOND COUNT RECORDS: Least Sandpiper at Rollingview, two Hermit Thrush at Holly Point, Bobolink in the B.W. Wells Area, Swainson's Thrush at Blue Jay Point and the park office area, Cedar Waxwings and Palm Warbler in area 4/5,

Eastern Screech Owl at Durant Nature Park, which also had our third Great Horned and some nice CW warblers.

MISSES: Northern Bobwhite, Cooper's Hawk, Caspian Tern and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. .....

#### **Book Corner**

The Club includes a lot of Bernd Heinrich fans so one new book worth mentioning is The Snoring Bird -- not a bird book per se, but rather Heinrich's memoir of his family life growing up (and particularly his father), and how he was molded into the naturalist he is today.

Also this summer, The National Wildlife Federation's Field Guide to North American Birds by Ned Brinkley was published; an impressive, elegant, all-photographic guide, for those who have space on their shelf for just maybe perhaps possibly one more field guide.

For art lovers out there (and who here doesn't like great bird art) Fifty Uncommon Birds of the Upper **Midwest** is said to be a beautifully done volume by artist Dana Gardner, with accompanying text from Nancy Overcott.

Scott Weidensaul, always noteworthy, is out with **Of A** Feather: A Brief History of American Birding, but I'm even more intrigued by The Life of the Skies, a soon-to-be-released historical look at birding in America by Jonathan Rosen. Also soon-to-be-published is **Roger Tory Peterson: A Biography**, by Douglas Carlson -- any more need be said...

#### **2007 SPRING BIRD COUNT TOTALS**

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	4/29	5/1	5/2	5/6	5/5	•		_				• •		_(	Chape	l Hill	Obse	rver	Party	Num	ıber -	_						
Species	Dur	KL	$\mathbf{FL}$	JL	СН	overlap	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		12	-			16	17	18	19	20	21	22
White-throated	58	45	19	14	39					2	1	2				21			5		7	1						
White-crowned	17	2			1		1																					
JUNCO, Dark-eyed	2																											
CARDINAL, Northern	393	213	259	273	624		9	24	2	33	36	17	9	71		60	42	10	23	13	49	13	35	9	9	38	55	67
GROSBEAK, Rose-breasted	1	2	2	8	23				5								1		2		14	1	_					
Blue	28	31	25	49	44		6	7		2	1	П			П	2		3	4	1	9	1	8					
BUNTING, Indigo	109	93	77	124	112		8	4		5	9	П		8		13		3	2	1	12	27	9		4	7		
BOBOLINK	23	66	12	5	35		29											6										
BLACKBIRD, Red-winged	86	56	9	36	154		14	6			6	13		10		7	1	2	8		19	4	10	4	30	3	16	1
MEADOWLARK, Eastern	23	41	7	10	16		11	2																			3	
GRACKLE, Common	270	97	136	141	318		25			12	13	17		18	4	9	29	1	1	10	14	6	40	1	35	22	18	28
COWBIRD, Brown-headed	144	67	73	120	176		8	12	3	7	7	6	1	2	2	14	11	4	7	10	23	8	_		4	4	1	22
ORIOLE, Orchard	17	27	23	25	41		2	2								2	1	2	3		11	7	_	3	-	1		
Baltimore	1		1	2	3		Ē	Ħ				Н				1			1		1			_	Ė			=
FINCH, House	25	7	15	43	149		2	6	$\Box$	3	5	5		17	П	15	16	7			8	2	2			21	8	32
GOLDFINCH, American	199	97	228	148	399		15	17	9	25	14	15	6	-	4	39	18	-	10	7	48	13	_	13	5	26	6	45
SPARROW, House	38	11	15	25	71		3			3	5	2		8		5	8			Ť	23				Ť		Ť	14
												П											t					
TOTAL SPECIES 153	117	124	120	126	127		63	65	22	64	75	65	23	67	16	85	60	52	75	33	88	86	63	59	63	68	42	57
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	6531	4979	5281	6487	9824	130	407	465	50	480	455	424	73	711	48	768	452	221	514	167	931	709	521	373	418	640	394	733
																							•					
Number of Groups	13	9	12	18	22		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Number of Participants	17	10	19	39	44		1	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	5	3	1	1	2	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	8
Start					500			640		500	630	630	800	530	1500	645	730	530	630	730	700	530	600	800	550	650	530	630
End					1900			1410		1330	1430	1430	900	1700	1600	1900	1645	1530	1500	1030	1700	1400	1230	1600	1320	1320	1730	1600
Party Hours: Total	81.9	73.75	75.75	111	144		3.5	8	0.25	6	8	7	1	11	1	8	9.2	5	7	3	9	8.5	6.5	8	7.3	6.5	6.25	14
Party Hours: On Foot	68.65	55.5	61	92	117.7		3	7.5	0.25	5.5	6.5	6	1	9	1	7.5	5.7	5	6	2.5	8	8	6		4	5.5	5.75	14
Party Hours: By Car	13.25	18.25	14.75	19	15		0.5	0.5		0.5	1.5	1		2		0.5	3.5		1	0.5	1	0.5	0.5			1	0.5	
Party Hours: By Bicycle					0																							
Party Hours: By Boat					11.3																			8	3.3			
Party Miles: Total	111	215	189.5	219.3	200		6	19	0	5	31	5	1	11	1.5	12	23.8	3	6	12	5	9	5	7	8	12	11.7	6
Party Miles: On Foot	62	40	45.75	61.3	79		1	4	0	3	6	2	1	7	1.5	6	3.8	3	5	1.4	3	6	4		5	1.6	8.7	6
Party Miles: By Car	49	175	143.75	158	111		5	15		2	25	3		4		6	20		1	10.6	2	3	1			10.4	3	
Party Miles: By Bicycle					0																							
Party Miles: By Boat					10																			7	3			
Owling Hours	0.75	0.5		2.5	0.5					0.25																	0.25	
Owling Miles	0	0.5		19	0					0																		
n	les Amon-		Dort 3	fom!							Dor-t-	A				Dord	. 1.7.											
Par	ty Areas	()	Party M		,					ı	-	Area	S					nbers										
	1 1,4 (pa		Derb Ca		D IT	.11						22N					an Sw		A	P	C - 1							
	2 1,2,4,7		Pam Tin		rerry Ha	aiand						22S	_					Cooke				ke						
	3 4-yard		Cynthia	Fox							15	23, 2	5			Amal	ne Tu	ffin, S	nelley	They	ye							

Party Areas	Party Members	Party Areas	Party Members
1 1,4 (part)	Derb Carter	13 22N	Nathan Swick
2 1,2,4,7	Pam Timmons, Perry Haaland	14 22S	Anson R. Cooke, Anson D. Cooke
3 4-yard	Cynthia Fox	15 23, 25	Amalie Tuffin, Shelley Theye
4 9,10	Norm Budnitz	16 24N-south	Doug Shadwick, Bob Rybczynski
5 11,12	Kent Fiala	17 24N-north	Judy Murray
6 14,17	Judy Teague, Mike Andrews, Todd Shapley-Quinn	18 24 (Morgan)-canoe	Ginger Travis, Marty McClelland, Deb Reilly
7 14,15 (part)	Mike Schultz	19 24 (New Hope)-kaya	d Jacob Socolar
8 15,18	Bob Chase	20 24S	Alan Johnston, David Welch
9 16	Alan Kneidel	21 26	Jane Brinkley
10 20, 13	Will Cook, Lisa Merschel, Steve Quinley,	22 32	Maurice & Steven Graves, Kim Aycrigg, Candace Owens, Joan Redmann
	Jenny Palmer, Carl Rothfels		Jerrold & Joan Walecka, David Murdock
11 21	Ken Lundstrom, Harriet Sato, June Beyman		Feeders: Barbara Roth, Harry & Caroline Pederson
12 21 (part)	Loren Hintz		

 $Dur=Durham\ count\ 4/29/07 \qquad \qquad KL=Kerr\ Lake\ count\ 5/1/07 \qquad FL=Falls\ Lake\ count\ 5/2/07 \qquad JL=Jordan\ Lake\ count\ 5/6/07 \qquad CH=Chapel\ Hill\ count\ 5/5/07 \qquad FL=Falls\ Lake\ count\ 5/2/07 \qquad JL=Jordan\ Lake\ count\ 5/6/07 \qquad CH=Chapel\ Hill\ count\ 5/5/07 \qquad FL=Falls\ Lake\ count\ 5/6/07 \qquad FL=Falls\ Falls\ Falls$ 

Chapel Hill weather: low 55, high 66; wind N 0-5 mph; cloudy; light rain

Durham: low 38, high 67; wind NE 5-15 mph; mostly cloudy; no precip

Kerr Lake: low 62, high 89; wind 0-10 mph; clear; no precip

Falls Lake: low 64, high 86; wind 0-10 mph;clear-partly cloudy; no precip Jordan Lake: low 60, high 70; wind N 10-20 mph; overcast-clear;no precip