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*birding the triangle . . . and beyond, for over half a century*

# The Bulletin

## Chapel Hill Bird Club

April 2013

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### Next Meeting: Monday, 22 April

**When/where:** 7:15 pm refreshments;  
7.30 pm meeting. The lounge, Olin T  
Binkley Baptist Church, corner of  
Highway 15-501 Bypass and Willow  
Drive, behind University Mall, Chapel  
Hill.

#### 19 April 2013:

**David Smith.** President of the Chapel  
Hill Bird Club.

#### ***Birds (and wildlife) in Kenya.***

Kenya has long been known as a  
destination for wildlife-watchers on  
safari. The elephants, zebras and  
lions in the many game parks are  
easy to see and photograph. But  
Kenya is also a wonderful place for  
birding, with several dozen endemic  
and near-endemic birds, and the  
comfortable safari lodges are as  
welcoming to birders. Join president  
and vice-president of the Chapel Hill  
Bird Club, David and Judy Smith, on  
their photographic tour of the birds  
(and mammals) of Kenya

### Welcome New Members

Olivia Bergner  
Anne and Paul Dayer  
Kay Edgar  
Sue and Fred Schroeder  
Carol Tuskey

### Future Meetings

20 May 2013: **Norm Budnitz**, science  
teacher par excellence. *Birding  
islands in the Bering Sea*

This will be the last meeting until  
September. There are no meetings  
(or Bulletins) in June, July, August  
and December.

### Saturday Field Trips

Trips are led by **Doug Shadwick** and  
depart from Glen Lennox Shopping  
Center parking lot off Highway 54  
promptly at 7.30 every Saturday  
morning. All skills are welcome. Trips  
are usually over by noon. Dress for  
the weather and for walking.  
Details? Call Doug at 919 942 0479.  
It's useful to call Doug the night  
before in case the field trip is not  
local and leaves from another  
location.

### 2012 Chapel Hill Christmas Bird Count Summary

*by Will Cook, count compiler*

The 83rd Chapel Hill Christmas  
Bird Count on Sunday, 23  
December 2012, was well above  
average, with the total number of  
species, 92, and number of  
individual birds, 16985, above the

10-year average numbers (88.5 and 14930). Party-hours were only slightly higher than normal, so on a birds per party-hour basis it was a great count, with 121 much higher than the average 109.

The best bird was a Virginia Rail, new to the count, which Jacob Socolar and Scott Winton heard grunting at the Little Creek waterfowl impoundment on NC 54. Not completely unexpected, since they're found most years at Lake Wheeler on the Raleigh CBC, they may be here every winter, but go undetected probably because most people don't get out and beat the marshes like Jacob and Scott did. Jacob and Scott also had a flyover calling flock of crossbills, which, after much study, they decided were Red Crossbills, only our fourth record and the first since 1973.



Red Crossbill photo by Jeff Catlin  
(not one of the ones on our count)

Several other outstanding rarities were found: 3 Tundra Swans were seen high over Jordan Lake by Reed Bowman, an avian ecologist visiting from Florida. These are only our third for the count and a record high. A Common Loon, our first since 1995, was heard calling at Jordan Lake at sunrise by Reed and his teammates Rouse Wilson and Phil Warren. An immature Broad-winged Hawk, only our third record, first since 1972, was seen by the team of Pam Timmons, Perry Haaland, and Chris Hitt. Derb Carter found a Merlin at Maple View Farm, only our fourth and first since 1999. The day before the count Derb found two Fish Crows in downtown Chapel Hill; Pam Timmons followed up on the report on count day and heard one, only our second. A possible Rose-breasted Grosbeak was reported, but the observer wasn't sure enough for what would be a first count record.

Other nice finds on count day included Least Sandpiper (Brian Bockhahn and Kyle Kittelberger), good numbers of Wilson's Snipe (4 parties), an adult male Baltimore Oriole (at Julia Shields's feeder), and a count week Evening Grosbeak.

We set a couple of dramatic record highs this year: Bonaparte's Gull, with 357 tripling the old high of 120 set in 2001, and Red-shouldered Hawk, with

the 57 reported blowing away the old high of 38 set just last year. Other highs include Great Horned Owl (11, 9 in 2009), Pileated Woodpecker (27, 24 in 2006), Winter Wren (57, 45 in 2005), Rusty Blackbird (1085, 816 in 2007), and Pine Siskin (558, 357 in 2010). We found a good number of Red-breasted Nuthatches (48 is our second highest, behind 81 in 1980). Several other species were not records, but more than doubled their average counts: Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Swamp Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Purple Finch.

We set no record lows and there were no big misses, but a few common species were recorded at less than half of their average numbers: Mallard, Double-crested Cormorant (they were just a little further south this year, inside the Jordan Lake count circle, where they set a high), Rock Pigeon, and Common Grackle. Pine Warblers rebounded from their odd scarcity last winter and were found in good numbers (3.5 times as many this year as last).

Team honors: Once again Derb Carter, covering the Dairyland Road area, had the highest species count, with 68 species (1223 individuals). Thanks in part to a big flock of Rusty Blackbirds at Mason Farm, Will Cook and Katherine Gura tallied the most

individual birds, with 2505 (57 species).

Weather: Temperature 24-55 F, wind from the southwest at 0-10 mph, partly cloudy, no precipitation, water open. Effort: 47 observers in 21 field parties, 140 party hours (122 by foot, 18 by car) and 306 party miles (79.2 by foot, 226.8 by car), 3.25 hours and 7.25 miles owling, 6 people and 14.5 hours watching feeders.

Thanks to all the participants for another great count!

See pages 4-6 of this issue of *The Bulletin* for the full count tally.

## **Officers of the Chapel Hill Bird Club**

### ***Elected Officers***

**President: David Smith**

(davidjudysmith@gmail.com)

**Vice President (Durham area): Judy Smith** (davidjudysmith@gmail.com)

**Vice President (Chapel Hill area):** Kent Fiala (kent.fiala@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Patrica Bailey (pbailey\_489@yahoo.com)

**Secretary:** Edith Tatum (etatum@nc.rr.com)

### ***Appointed Officers***

**Bird Count Supervisor/compiler:**

Will Cook (cwcook@duke.edu)

**Field Trip Chairman:** Doug Shadwick (dougshadwick@nc.rr.com)

**Bulletin Editor:** Judith Fortney (jafortney1@aol.com)

**Webmaster:** Will Cook (cwcook@duke.edu)





## 2012 Triangle Area Christmas Bird Counts

— Chapel Hill Observer Party —

Species	12/15	12/16	12/30	1/3	1/4	12/23	— Chapel Hill Observer Party —																											
	Ral	Dur	JL	Kerr	Falls	CH	ovlp	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
Northern Cardinal	307	425	220	198	212	491		34	7	33	3	25	7	62	10	7	25	30	35	29	26	7	12	13	6	6	2	32	1	26	6	20	27	
<b>DICKCISSEL</b>	1																																	
Red-winged Blackbird	564	1451	678	554	295	1092		3		7			5	21	38	3	295	150		195	27	25	60		16	60				170			17	
Eastern Meadowlark	29	29	70	152	39	15		1				9											5											
Rusty Blackbird	71	347		4		<b>1085</b>											81			1000				4										
Common Grackle	75	44	2	6	5	25							2			20	1	2																
Brown-headed Cowbird	202	59			2	18		17						1																				
Baltimore Oriole	8					1								1																				
Purple Finch	14		35	6	17	46		6	5	3							5	8				1								2	16			
House Finch	198	134	83	58	55	292		27	4	32	1	5		22	6	2	28	43	14	4	17				2			19	14	10	7	35		
<b>WHITE-W CROSSBILL</b>		12																																
<b>Red Crossbill</b>						20											20																	
<i>crossbill sp.</i>			50																															
Pine Siskin	376	<b>560</b>	151	165	177	<b>558</b>		57	60	2	24		3	41	41	3	57	40	34	20	6	24		1	3					20	22		100	
American Goldfinch	473	403	280	162	201	565		27	8	24	4	33	8	51	14	6	38	51	19	34	15	34	13	25	9	12	3	5	43	14		75		
<b>Evening Grosbeak</b>					1	cw														cw														
House Sparrow	104	47	7	20	27	46		4		10				2			5	18			2									3		2		
<b>TOTAL SPECIES 132</b>	99	98	88	103	100	92	6	<b>68</b>	27	52	24	40	31	54	48	42	64	58	35	57	45	54	52	43	44	42	24	32	14	50	25	23	42	
<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS</b>	14194	19302	55031	12643	19229	16985	161	1223	222	655	76	593	230	1037	495	316	1744	1273	485	<b>2505</b>	591	590	1028	381	500	345	76	438	55	982	203	216	887	
Number of Field Parties	18	17	23	10	14	21		1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	
Number of Participants	63	40	63	19	24	47		1	0	2	0	1	1	6	4	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	2	5	
Start Time:	530	600	600	500	530	500		500	800	710	700		745	650	615	700	715	700	700	645	800	530	600	730	630	715		745	730		705	630		
End Time:	1600	1700	1800	1830	1830	1745		1700	1430	1645	830		1045	1559	1430	1600	1630	1515	1655	1745	1530	1215	1300	1230	1145	1140		1445	1640		1120	1300		
<b>Party Hours: Total</b>	88.5	113	129.3	72.5	94.75	140		11	0	8	0	4	3	8.5	8.5	8.5	7	8.3	5.3	8	7.5	6.3	6	4.5	4.8	4.5		5.5	0	10	0	3.5	8	
Party Hours: On Foot	79	99	106.3	52.5	80.5	122		9		7.5		3	3	7	8	7	6	7	5.3	8	6.5	5.5	5.25	4.5	4.5	1	5.5		8		3.5	7		
Party Hours: By Car	8.5	14	23	20	14.25	18		1.5		0.5		1		1.5	0.5	1.5	1	1.3			1	0.8	0.75		0.3	3.5			2			1		
Party Hours: By Boat	1																																	
<b>Party Miles: Total</b>	151.5	215	261.8	139.5	189.5	306		48	0	7.5	0	13	2	15	5.5	37	18	38	5.5	4	24	7	24	1.5	5	16	0	5	0	25	0	2	5	
Party Miles: On Foot	58.5	75	76.75	26	56.25	79.2		2.5		3.5		3	2	7.5	2.5	7	3	3.7	5.5	4	4	5	6	1.5	3	1	5		4.5		2	3		
Party Miles: By Car	92.5	140	185	113.5	133.3	226.8		45		4		10		7	3	30	15	34			20	2	18		2	15		20				2		
Party Miles: By Boat	0.5																																	
Nocturnal Hours	3	0	5.25	1.75	5	3.25		1.5							0.5		0.3					0.5											0.5	
Nocturnal Miles	1.5	0	6	0.5	5.25	7.25		6							0		0.3					1											0	
Feeder Watchers	2	1	0	1	2	6			1		1			1														1		1		1		
Feeder Hours	2	0	0	2.75	11.5	14.5			3		1.5			2													3		1		4			

**CH:** Chapel Hill count date: 12/23/12; compiler: Will Cook; 24-55 F; SW 0-10 mph; partly-mostly cloudy, no precip, water open  
**Ral:** Raleigh count date: 12/15/12; compiler: John Connors  
**Falls:** Falls Lake count date: 1/4/13; compiler: Brian Bockhahn

**Kerr:** Kerr Lake count date: 1/3/13; compiler: Brian Bockhahn  
**Dur:** Durham count date: 12/16/12; compiler: Mike Schultz and Jacob Socolar  
**JL:** Jordan Lake count date: 12/30/12; compiler: Norm Budnitz

Party Areas	Party Members	Party	Areas	Party Members
1 1,4	Derb Carter	15	22 N	Brian Bockhahn, Kyle Kittelberger
2 1-yard	Charlie Kernick	16	22 S	Phil Warren, Rouse Wilson, Reed Bowman
3 2,7	Pam Timmons, Perry Haaland	17	23,25	Amalie Tuffin
4 4-yard	Cynthia Fox	18	24 N	Doug Shadwick
5 3,5	Nate Swick	19	24 S	Edith Tatum, Peggy Maslow
6 6	Mike Riley	20	25-yard	Shelley Theye
7 8, 13	Tom & Barbara Driscoll, Bo Howes, Jill Paul, Don McCormick, Maria de Bruyn	21	27	Ben Riegel
8 9, 10	Norm Budnitz, Gene Kingsley, Julia Storm, Laurie Degernes	22	28-yard	Amy Denham
9 11, 12	Kent Fiala	23	30	Jane Oliver, Mark Kosiewski
10 14, 17	Scott Winton, Jacob Socolar	24	30-yard	Jill Froning
11 15,18	Chuck Byrd, Mike Tove, Eddie Owens	25	31	Pat Cummins and Tom Biek
12 16, 29	David Smith, Judy Hinderliter Smith	26	32	Maurice Graves, Steven Graves, David Murdock, Bobbie Hahn, Sam Baron
13 20	Will Cook, Katherine Gura			