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Doug Pratt

Chapel Hill Bird Club Bulletin

May 2014

Volume 42

No.5

Next Meeting: Monday, 19 May (NOT the 26th)

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 May: **Brian Bockhahn:**
Spectacular birds of NC
State Parks.*

From the mountains to the sea, North Carolina's state parks offer critical habitats for migrating and year-round birds and wonderful opportunities for birders to hone their bird identification skills. Brian Bockhahn has birded all 40 of North Carolina's state parks and compiles five different Christmas bird counts and more than 50 wildlife monitoring programs. Come join us as Brian Bockhahn, District Education Specialist for the state park system, describes the spectacular birds of our state parks.

Saturday Field Trips

Doug Shadwick is retiring after a quarter century leading Saturday field trips for club members and sometimes their family members or visitors. Doug was especially known for his incredible hearing and ability to identify songs, call notes and chips. Doug's trips were usually local, but sometimes further afield to the mountains or the coast. The annual January trip to Lake Mattamuskeet and the coast was a much anticipated event. Every member of the CHBC should deeply appreciate this kind of leadership and devotion. Doug's hiking boots will be hard to fill, but in September, when the Saturday field trips resume, Bob Rybczynski will take on the role of trip leader. More on Bob in the next (September) issue of this Bulletin.

Welcome New Members! 😊

Kathleen Snipes of Chapel Hill;
Mary Russell Roberson of Durham.

Snipes is a good name for a birder! Mary Russell is a second generation CHBC member, daughter of our former Treasurer.

Light Summer Reading for Birders

You won't learn a lot about birds from these novels, but you might learn something about birders – though you probably already know.

A Guide to the Birds of East Africa – A Novel. (Nicholas Drayson, 2008, Mariner Books). Quite a whimsical story, a bit in the style of *The Ladies' Number One Detective Agency* (Alexander McCall Smith), this story is based on the Tuesday morning bird walks that start from the natural history museum in Nairobi (the home base of Lucy, the famous early human skeleton). This was especially fun for me because I once went on one of those walks, and it was much as described. It describes a Big Week competition between two birders to win, not the hand of the lady fair (the trip leader), but the right to invite her to the ball. Nice descriptions of various birds and habitats, and you don't have to have been to Kenya to enjoy it.

Books by Ann Cleeves:

Sea Fever; Hidden Depths; Another Man's Poison; Murder in Paradise; A Prey to Murder; A Bird in the Hand; A Mill on the Shore.

These are all whodunnits, and the detective is a bit of a bumberbirder (all the best detectives seem to be so). George Palmer-Jones is a birder and his frumpy but clever wife Molly is not. Most of the books are set in some of the well-known birdy spots in Britain – the Scilly Isles, the Scottish Isles, the Northumberland Coast, Norfolk coast, even a pelagic off Cornwall. Cleeves obviously knows her birds (and birders!) and tis his one of the charms of these books. The motives behind the murders, though, are only sometimes about birds – the poisoning of raptors, fundraising in support of peregrines, getting there before everyone else to see a Bimaculated Lark, the first sighting a new petrel. And sometimes more complex – an environmentalist playing down high biological diversity to achieve development rights; lovers' triangles (of course).

Ann Cleeves' books were written in the '80s and '90s and can be hard to get hold of now. Several of mine are stamped "Library Discard", but they are worth the effort.

Future Meetings

The May 19th meeting will be the last before the summer break. We will resume the speaker program (and this Bulletin) in September. The vice presidents will spend the summer lining up more terrific speakers for the 2014–15 season. If there is a topic you are yearning to hear about, or know an inspiring speaker (on birds or birding, that is), please get in touch with one of our VPs.

More details on next season's speakers in the September Bulletin.

Officers of the Chapel Hill Bird Club

Elected Officers

President: David Smith

(davidjudysmith@frontier.com)

Vice President (Durham area): Eddie

Owens (banjoman_57@yahoo.com)

Vice President (Chapel Hill area):

Kent Fiala (kent.fiala@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Patricia Bailey

(pbailey_489@yahoo.com)

Secretary: Edith Tatum

(ektatum@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

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Anyone interested in serving on the board of the Chapel Hill Bird Club, or volunteering in any other capacity, should contact President David Smith.