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<http://chbc.carolinanature.com>



Brown-headed Nuthatch by Doug Pratt

## Chapel Hill Bird Club Bulletin

September, 2016

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### Next Meeting Monday, September 26, 2016

**Time and location:** 7:15 pm refreshments; 7:30 pm meeting. Olin T Binkley Baptist Church, corner of Highway 15-501 Bypass and Willow Drive, behind University Mall, Chapel Hill, NC

Members and guests are welcome to gather for dinner at the K & W Cafeteria (University Mall) at 6 pm before the meeting. Go to the back room of the cafeteria to join the group after making your dinner selection.

### September 26, 2016 Program Citizen Science and Stewardship: Birds and Beyond Speaker: Caren Cooper

When Caren Cooper conducts studies of bird populations, she relies on data provided by multitudes of birdwatchers across the country. Initiatives like the Christmas Bird Count and the Nest Watch program enlist this army of citizen scientists whose contributions are rapidly changing the way scientists study bird life. Join us as Caren Cooper speaks about her forthcoming book (<http://amzn.to/2bMtkom>) and describes her passion to engage citizen scientists to study bird ecology and wildlife conservation.

**About the speaker:** Caren Cooper is the assistant head of the Biodiversity Research Lab at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and Associate Professor at NC State University in the Chancellor's Faculty Excellence Program for leadership in public science. She is an avian ecologist and relies on citizen science to help communities use birds as indicators of environmental health.

### CHBC Field Trip Program

It's September and the Chapel Hill Bird Club's Saturday morning birding trips resume after a summer hiatus. See page three for details.



Group led by Bob Rybczynski at Mason Farm

## President's Message

by David Smith

Hello, fellow Bird Club members, and welcome to fall! We have survived another hot summer in North Carolina, and I hope you were able to get out and see some birds, either near home or at some more exotic location.

The Chapel Hill Bird Club's 2016-2017 season starts this month, with our meeting on September 26. (Actually, the season has already begun, with the first of our Saturday morning field trips on September 3.) Our Vice-Presidents, Eddie Owens and Anne Dayer, have some great presentations lined up, starting with Caren Cooper on the value of Citizen Science in studying bird populations. Caren's talk was originally scheduled for last January but was cancelled because of the winter storm; we've been waiting for months to hear from her.

There are two issues that we will be dealing with over the coming months. First, three of our officers (the President and both of the Vice-Presidents) have expressed a desire to step down at the end of the season. The job of the President involves not much beyond running the monthly meetings, so that's quite easy. The Vice-Presidents, on the other hand, have the very important responsibility for finding, inviting, and publicizing each of the eight monthly speakers. For two people to jump into that job next summer with no experienced partner might be daunting. So what we would like to do is identify one or two candidates who will be willing to serve as VP next year and who can "apprentice" with Eddie and Anne now, learning the publicity procedures and beginning to collect ideas for the 2017-2018 season. If you're interested, please check with me or with Eddie or Anne.

The second issue is our projector, which we use every month to show the slides that our speaker brings. It still works reliably, but it's now more than nine years old. Good projectors now on the market have much higher resolution, brighter colors, and better contrast than ours, and they have much more flexibility in how they connect. It won't be long before a speaker shows up at our meeting with a laptop that does not even have the one type of connector (VGA) that our projector requires. We're interested in buying a new projector, and although our bank balance is healthy, we would be delighted to accept contributions to defray part of the cost (perhaps \$700). We're also interested in selling our current projector, either to an individual or group locally (for a great price) or maybe on eBay. Please let me know if you can help.

Finally, don't forget that the fall migration season has begun. The shorebirds and raptors are on the move, and the warblers aren't far behind. Get out and watch some birds! Report your sightings on eBird and on our Facebook page. Enjoy!

I look forward to seeing you at Binkley on September 26.

## The CHBC Field Trip Program

article and photos by Bob Rybczynski

The Chapel Hill Bird Club has been conducting field trips for decades and this fall is no exception. The general schedule for field trips can be found at <http://chbc.carolinanature.com/fieldtrips.html> but the specifics for any given Saturday's trip will be posted on Carolinabirds and the Chapel Hill Bird Club's Facebook page 1 or 2 days beforehand. Specifics will include that week's destination, any changes in meeting time or location as well as recommendations for special footwear, bringing a lunch etc.

Most trips are to areas within about 25 miles of Chapel Hill and finish by noon but we do range further afield. In the last two years, we've made trips to Weymouth Woods for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and Bachman's Sparrows and last year we had views of the



woodpeckers so close that binoculars were not necessary!

Another new destination is White Pines Preserve, north of Sanford. This area is good for spring migrant and breeding warblers like Louisiana Waterthrush, Prothonotary and Hooded Warblers.

I usually see Veeries here in spring and once had a mini-fallout of Worm-eating Warblers, with 12 seen in one morning!



Fall and winter trips often visit Mason farm, Jordan and Falls Lake, and rural areas west of Chapel Hill for migrants and winter visitor species. In years when summer droughts cause the local lake levels to drop enough to create mudflats, we have special trips to see shorebirds. These trips have yielded such species as Avocet, Wilson's Phalarope, and Baird's, White-rumped and Buff-breasted Sandpipers.



Our trips destinations are not written in stone and I am always open to suggestions for new locations, or even for a chase to see a rare species outside the immediate area.

If you haven't participated, I hope you'll consider attending one of our Saturday morning bird walks. Birders of all skill levels are welcome.

## **CAROL WOODS BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT**

by Sue Schroeder

Just off Weaver Dairy Road in Chapel Hill, in a lovely wooded area of over 30 acres, one can find 28 nesting boxes for bluebirds located throughout the Carol Woods Retirement Community. The Trail, started in 1998 by Audrey Booth, has proven to be a very successful venture for the Carol Woods Bird Club. In the early years there were 30 boxes on the campus and annual reports indicate that each season proved successful in fledging young birds. In 2003, the highest number of 162 fledged bluebirds was reported. Since that year the number of boxes has decreased slightly due to campus construction of new buildings. It has been noted, also, that new residential development surrounding the campus has adversely affected the number of bluebirds in the area.

Each year during the nesting season, volunteers monitor the boxes and report weekly to the trail master, Ed Davis, on the status of the boxes. This season has been the most successful during Ed's time as trail master. In the 28 nest boxes, there have been 52 nesting attempts with 192 eggs laid.



Carol Woods Bluebird Clutch  
Photo by Fred Schroeder

From those eggs, 143 young bluebirds have hatched and 125 birds have fledged. Ed reported that there is some evidence that black snakes were responsible for the loss of eggs; however, he has also noticed that this year there were no "takeovers" of boxes by house wrens! All in all, it has been a successful year for bluebirds.

## **Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont**

by Jon Storm

The Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont is a picture-based identification guide to over 700 species in the Carolinas and Georgia and it includes common animals, plants, fungi, slime molds, animal tracks, skulls and bones, rocks, minerals, and nature sounds. It can be downloaded as an eBook for free to any electronic device from [www.uscupstate.edu/fieldguide](http://www.uscupstate.edu/fieldguide) and the picture for most species will hyperlink to a reputable website with natural history information. Although this is not the field guide members would likely use for bird identification, it may be useful for identifying other organisms encountered while birdwatching in the Piedmont.

## Future Meetings

Over the summer our Vice Presidents Eddie Owens and Anne Dayer have lined up some stellar speakers for the coming year. The following is a list of speakers and their topics:

**October 24, 2016, Jessie Birkhead**

- **Topic:** Coexisting with Wildlife: A Practical Guide to Common Human-Wildlife Interactions and How to Handle Them

**November 28, 2016, John Gerwin**

- **Topic:** There are Mountains Beyond Mountains

**December, No Meeting**

**January 23, 2017, Ted Simmons**

- **Topic:** The American Oystercatcher

**February 27, 2016, Kent Fiala**

- **Topic:** eBirding 101

**March 27, 2016, Ashley Dayer**

- **Topic:** Why Conservation Needs Social Science: Understanding Human Behavior

**April 24, 2016, Dustin Foote**

- **Topic:** Falconry: An Ancient Art in Modern Times

**May 15, 2016, David and Judy Smith**

- **Topic:** Pantanal: The Wonderful Wetland of Brazil

## Officers of the Chapel Hill Bird Club

### Elected Officers

**President:** David Smith  
([davidjudysmith@frontier.com](mailto:davidjudysmith@frontier.com))

**Co-Vice President:** Eddie Owens  
([banjoman\\_57@yahoo.com](mailto:banjoman_57@yahoo.com))

**Co-Vice President:** Anne Dayer  
([annedayer@gmail.com](mailto:annedayer@gmail.com))

**Treasurer:** Patricia Bailey  
([pbailey\\_489@yahoo.com](mailto:pbailey_489@yahoo.com))

**Secretaries:** Sue and Fred Schroeder  
([fshroed@mindspring.com](mailto:fshroed@mindspring.com))

### Appointed Officers

**Bird Count Supervisor/compiler:**  
Will Cook ([cwcook@duke.edu](mailto:cwcook@duke.edu))

**Field Trip Chairman:** Bob Rybczynski  
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