



Our April Program Meeting Is Coming Up!

Robert Driver--Evolution and Functional Characterization of Olfactory Receptors in Birds

When: Monday, April 28, 2025 at 7:15pm (light refreshments served at 7:15, program to start at 7:30)

Where: Binkley Baptist Church, 1712 Willow Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27514 or on [Zoom](#)

RSVP: Let us know you are coming by responding to our [Facebook event](#). To attend by Zoom, register to get the Zoom link [here](#).

ABOUT THE APRIL PROGRAM.

Vertebrates detect odor molecules with olfactory receptors (ORs), a gene family expressed in the olfactory epithelium. Among species, OR diversity is associated with reliance on smell, with some mammals exceeding 2,000 OR genes. Birds are the most speciose class of terrestrial vertebrates, inhabiting nearly all land environments and with diverse social structures and foraging strategies, yet were long thought to make limited use of olfactory signals. Recent behavioral work in birds has shown important roles for olfaction in foraging and species recognition, among other behaviors. Contributing to this surge of interest in avian olfaction, our recent work has shown that birds have hundreds more OR genes in their genomes than previously realized.



Dr. Driver received his B.S. in Biology from Muhlenberg College in 2009 and his M.S. degree in Biology in 2017 from Villanova University. In 2022, Robert received his PhD in Biology from East Carolina University. Robert is currently an NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Biology in the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology at Duke University, in the lab of Dr. Hiroaki Matsunami, where he researches bird olfactory receptors and bird sense of smell.

Find the lineup of future speakers on our [here](#).

2025 Chapel Hill Spring Bird Count Set for May 3rd!

This year's Chapel Hill Spring Bird Count will be on Saturday, May 3. New counters are welcome! For returning counters, please [email Will Cook](#) to let him know if you can count your usual area or you'd like to try a new area. Thanks!



Count forms: [Excel](#) | [pdf](#) - you can either email or mail in the forms when done. Ebird lists and trip reports are also welcome - please ensure that the required information such as full list of counters' names, hours and miles by foot and by car, etc., is included.

[Assignments](#) | [Count circle map](#) | [Procedures](#) | [Tips](#) | [Other local counts and contacts](#)

Field Trips

The Chapel Hill Bird Club is leading bird outings/field trips during the 1st and 3rd weekends of each month through April. Our field trips are open to all. Details of field trips are emailed to all members via the CHBC listserv, posted on our [website](#) and on our [Facebook page](#). Thank you to the New Hope Bird Alliance for posting our outings on [their calendar](#), too! Contact [Jim Capel](#) with questions about our field trips or to volunteer to lead a future outing for the Club.



Field Trip at Mason Farm, April 5

The purpose of the Chapel Hill Bird Club is to provide engagement and educational opportunities for area birders of all experience levels. We offer interesting educational programs, local birding field trips, Christmas and spring bird counts, and connection to other members via a Facebook group. Members have access to like-minded people including experts who can answer your questions. Whether you watch birds in your yard or travel to the ends of the earth to chase rarities, our club offers something for you. We are a friendly group and welcome all to join us, especially new birders! Our members are mostly from the Research Triangle area of North Carolina: Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, Cary, Pittsboro, and surrounding towns.

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