



The Piedmont Birder

Newsletter of the Piedmont Bird Club

Aug. – Oct. 2008 Vol. 19, No. 3
Newsletter of the

Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833

Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

piedmontbirdclub.org

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Whitmire

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The next deadline for newsletter items
is Oct. 15, 2008.

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OFFICERS FOR 2008-2009

President:	Susan Weimer
Vice President:	Jim Strickland
Recording Secretary:	Diana Bowman
Corresponding Secretary:	Peggy Ware
Treasurer:	Lary Treanor
Members-at-Large:	Howard Millican Pat Bradley

SPRING BIRDS IN RANDOLPH COUNTY

April 26 *By Craig Lawrence*

On April 26th, sixteen people joined Jane Lewis on a walk through this 210 acre land conservancy property in Randolph County. The day began cloudy, but as the sun came out, so did the birds. Later in the day thunderstorms passed close by, but the skies were quiet by the time the Whip-poor-wills began calling. The group saw a total of 61 species in a number of habitats: hardwood and pine forests, wetlands and streams, and open prairie. Many were able to have very close looks at a number of neo-tropical nesters including Yellow-throated Warbler, Summer Tanager, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Ovenbird, White-eyed Vireo and Prairie Warbler. Our last sighting, at dusk, was an American Woodcock that flew close over our heads, just before the Whip-poor-will started its evening chorus.

Sixteen species of warblers were seen. Other "birds of interest" included Broad-winged Hawk, Barred Owl, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Rose-breasted and Blue Grosbeaks.



Prairie Warbler

Photo © by Lou Skrabec

WVA FIELD TRIP

May 8-11, 2008

By Julien McCarthy

Eight PBC members and a guest joined Julien McCarthy and Judith Pate at their West Virginia getaway ("JUBLU") on the Bluestone River to enjoy a wonderful weekend of birding and socializing (including lots of good eating!).

In spite of rough weather on Friday and Sunday, all the birding and social activities were a resounding success. Most folks assembled at "JUBLU" on Thursday and began birding the property. They didn't have to look far to be richly rewarded, whether strolling along the river or relaxing on the front porch, where we watched a White-crowned Sparrow among other beauties.

On Friday we were honored to have the leadership of Jim Phillips, Pipestem State Park Naturalist, and surveyed the birds along Tom's Run as it descends to its confluence with the New River at Bull Falls Wildlife Management Area. Here we were overwhelmed with birds, including both orioles, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager and many more.

On Saturday, we traveled to Cove Creek at the foot of East River Mountain and began an ascent to the peak through a forest of mixed hardwoods and conifers. On the way up we had extraordinary views of several warbler species including Chestnut-sided and Blackburnian. And much to our surprise, around 11 a.m., we heard the call of a Whip-poor-will, this after sitting in the dark for an hour the night before, listening for them without success. Following a picnic at the top we descended the mountain and were treated to exceptional looks at Scarlet Tanagers and courting Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at eye level. We also enjoyed the

- See WVA, cont' on p. 5

From the
PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Susan Weimer

Our members are our most precious asset. Your devotion to spotting and identifying unusual birds, conservation issues, and service on the Executive Board and committees, makes this club a source of community pride. Our Web site is filled with your pictures, field trip reports, and descriptions of local birding sites. I would like to salute all of our members for their many contributions to the Club.

Plans for this year include an optional beginning time at 6:30 pm for a more social type of gathering to share thoughts on birding and birds before the program. We will gather at the KCE Library to welcome any new members and seasoned members who wish to arrive at 6:30 pm. The general meeting will start at 7:00 pm. The Bird of the Season presentation will be limited in scope and an effort will be made to shorten the Business Meeting so that you will have time to ask the speaker questions and have time to linger with your friends.

After this one, our Newsletter will be available in electronic format only, so you will need to look for it on the Piedmont Bird Club Web site. For those of you who do not get email or are not attached to the Internet, we plan to implement a "buddy system" so that you can keep connected to the Club.

Your Yearbook provides many choices for field trips and six excellent programs. As your President, I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as I can so I can thank you personally for your many contributions to this Club.



Amy Hanson and son Jeffrey at Country Park

EASTERN BLUEBIRD NEST BOX MONITORING AT COUNTRY PARK

By Amy Hanson

I moved to Greensboro in 2007 after having lived in the hustle and bustle of New York City for eight years, and prior to that in Chicago. I was very excited to be where nature was much closer and local birds more numerous and diverse. An old friend inspired me with how she had volunteered with her two children to monitor Bluebird nest boxes in Illinois. Lo and behold, at my first PBC meeting, I met Cal Weimer, who told me about the Eastern Bluebird nest box project at Country Park. I signed up immediately!

On my first day of orientation and training, Cal showed us all the boxes and described the history of the program, which began in 2001. Having lived in apartments most of my adult life, I had never had the privilege of watching nesting birds or putting up a bird box. So the first time Cal opened up a bird box, a Chickadee flew out, I saw four amazingly tiny eggs (white with brown spots), and was enthralled.

The breeding season was filled with beauty and wonder. I couldn't believe there could be a blue as beautiful as that of an Eastern Bluebird egg. Every time I saw one I was stunned. I even got to witness a Bluebird baby just beginning to peck its way out of one of those beautiful blue eggs. The season was also filled with excitement, drama and even a touch of mystery. Each week I would arrive at the first nest box, wondering what was going on inside - it was like a novel that's hard to put down. Which of the species checking out nest box #9 will end up nesting there - the Chickadees, the House Wren, or the Brown-headed Nuthatch? (The House Wren won.) Who will have more eggs? Have they hatched yet? What is going on in box #4, which has pine needles on the bottom (Bluebird activity), moss in the middle (Chickadee activity) and leaves on the top (??) - Ah, it's a Tufted Titmouse!

As of the writing of this article, 13 of the 17 bluebird boxes were utilized this breeding season: eight by Eastern Bluebirds, two by Carolina Chickadees, one

- See *Bluebird*, Cont. p. 3

WHITACRE'S FARM

April 19

By Carolyn Allen

Special thanks to the Whitacres for marvelous hospitality, the best sticky buns in North Carolina and some of the best birds in the County! Their lovely home offers a variety of wooded habitats (Blue-winged Warbler, Northern Parula, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo,) and open areas (Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Bluebirds, American Robins and Northern Mockingbirds.)

There were Great Blue Herons, Mallards and Canada Geese, Purple Martins and Louisiana Waterthrush taking advantage of the wetlands of Reedy Fork Creek.

A total of 44 species were seen and enjoyed here!



POTLUCK

August 8

By Elizabeth Link

On Saturday, August 8, 14 birders - members of the bird club and friends - made a tour of the mudflats on the perimeters of the Greensboro lakes in search of shorebirds and other post-breeding wanderers. The weather was sunny and breezy, and the humidity was low - about as nice a day as one could expect in the middle of August. While we were a couple of hours too late to relocate the Glossy Ibis (see photo on page 3 by Lou Skrabec, who did some pre-field-trip birding and managed to catch the ibis before it was harassed into leaving the area by some Great Blue Herons), we did come up with an interesting assortment of waders large and small, along with a sampling of local breeders.

Other waders and shorebirds included Great and Snowy Egrets, Green Heron, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, and Solitary, Spotted, Least, and Pectoral Sandpipers. Other interesting migrants were Chimney Swift, Great Crested Flycatcher, Tree Swallow and Indigo Bunting. We also saw two Red-headed Woodpeckers. The list totals 41 species.



EARLY BIRDS

What do birds and time have in common? I know you got that one – they both fly. PBC members don't have as much time to socialize as we would like because the KCEF Library closes at 9:00. So we've decided that if we can't stay late, we'll come early. All members, and especially new members, are invited to come to PBC meetings at 6:30 p.m. for an Early Bird Round Robin. Membership Committee and club officers will be present to kick off the conversation with a leading question, followed by... who knows what? We hope this will help us all become better acquainted more quickly. So be an Early Bird and show up for meetings at 6:30. We promise – no worms.

BIG NEWS

This will be the **last newsletter** that we will be printing and mailing. From now on it will be available on our Web site, in .pdf format. Archived newsletters are also there, at <http://piedmontbirdclub.org/newsletter/newsletter.htm>

The advantage of this new system is that we will save a lot of money on postage and printing costs, which like everything else are going **up up up**. Also, we will be able to include full color pictures on it, doing more justice to our increasingly shutter-happy members. The disadvantage is that those without e-mail capability will possibly have some problems, but we are working on a "computer buddy" system, by which those with computers will print off a copy for those without, and take or mail it to them. Susan Weimer is in charge of this project. Her phone # is 288-2160.



Glossy Ibis
Lake Townsend, Greensboro, NC
8/08/08
Photo © by Lou Skrabec

V.I.G. – VERY IMPORTANT GOALS

The PBC Membership Committee is focusing this year on two very important goals:

- 1) to make our new members feel welcome and included, and
- 2) to strengthen the sense of community and connection among our membership

You can help us achieve our goals by making an effort to greet and engage our new members and by participating in the activities we are initiating (such as described in three other articles on this page) to enable us all to get to know one another better.

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

All of our precious members (there are no semi-precious ones that I know of) will receive a "membership committee personal survey." Its completion and return will accelerate the process of getting to know each other and will facilitate the sharing of strengths among "the PBC flock." Designing the activities of our Club and its role in the community is best served when the general character of its membership is brought to the forefront. The information from this survey will provide a substantially accurate way to accomplish this. It will provide guidance to the leadership in planning the internal and external functions of the PBC.

- *Bluebird, cont. from p. 2*

by Brown-headed Nuthatches, one by House Wrens, and one by both House Wrens and Chickadees. Successful fledglings so far include 46 Bluebirds, 21 Chickadees, 4 Brown-headed Nuthatches, and 3 House Wrens.

In addition, my son and I learned a great deal about the intricacies of the nesting and fledging stages of birds. It also provided me with an excuse to spend time in Country Park and bird while I checked the boxes, the highlight of which was a Green Heron that was calling loudly as it glided. I am grateful to Cal and the Piedmont Bird Club for the opportunity to participate in this wonderful project.

Ed. Note: the original article was much too long for our printed newsletter, but you can read more about the nest box drama on our Web site at <http://piedmontbirdclub.org/park.html>

FALL PICNIC

Saturday, September 13 at Hagan-Stone Park, Shelter #6. Nature walk 5:30 p.m.; picnic 6:00 p.m. Bring a covered dish; beverages will be provided.

The potluck (covered dish) dinner will begin at 6:00. Bring whatever inspires you of the four main food groups: meats, vegetables, breads or desserts; we are trusting chance that we will get a good mix of food! The PBC will provide beverages - soft drinks, iced tea, water, and paper and plastic ware. So, bring some food, bring your binoculars, bring a hearty appetite and be prepared to have a good time!

Directions to Hagan-Stone Park:

Take 421 South from Greensboro. Drive to the stoplight at Hagan-Stone Park Road. (There are signs, but the sign to Forest Oaks is more prominent.) Turn right and go a couple of miles to the park entrance on the right. There are signs in the park to guide you to the shelter.

Coordinators: Dane Hill, 674-0951; Susan Weimer: 288-2160; sweimer@triad.rr.com

LOOK OUT FOR THE FOLKS WITH COLORED NAME BADGES!

This fall when you attend the PBC picnic or programs, you will notice something different about some of the name badges. They are color-coded by year of joining the club, retroactive to 2003. And club officers, committee chairs, and honorary members are identified by title in addition to their names. This will enable us all to identify new members and will help new members get to know who we are. This year's (2008-2009) badges will be green, and last year's (2007-2008) are blue. So look for people wearing green or blue, walk over, and say hello.



Barred Owl
Photo © by Jason Gould

FROM THE PBC ARCHIVES

By Susan Weimer, History and Archives Chair

The Regional Review, a publication for the National Parks Service, July, 1940

A SUCCESS IN NATURE LEADER TRAINING

Virginia Institute, First in South, Graduates 21

BY REYNOLD E. CARLSON,

DIRECTOR OF THE VIRGINIA NATURAL HISTORY INSTITUTE,

NATURE SPECIALIST, NATIONAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION.

At about 9:30 o'clock on the evening of July 19, William A. Bryson, 39, Supervisor of Recreation for the city of Richmond, Virginia, rose from a rude, backless bench, walked into the bright circle of light cast by a campfire, and stretched out his hand for a rectangle of paper measuring 9-1/2 by 12 inches. Through the ancient process of alphabetic selection he had become the first alumnus of the Virginia Natural History Institute. By similar destiny Lancaster D. Burling, 58, of Raleigh, North Carolina, formerly geologist for the Dominion of Canada, became graduate No. 2. Nineteen fellow students then received like paper certificates testifying to their completion of a four-week course of study.

The Institute was a pioneer. It offered the first training course for nature leaders that had ever been organized in the South. It originated out of the need of parks, recreation departments, camps, and schools for leaders who have field experience and can interpret the natural world from the recreational point of view.

The course was sponsored by four cooperating agencies: the National Park Service, the National Recreation Association, the Virginia State Conservation Commission, and the Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary. University credits were granted by the College of William and Mary to students satisfactorily completing requirements. Facilities of one of the organized camping units at Swift Creek Recreational Demonstration Area, eighteen miles southwest of Richmond, were made available to the students. Cabins, dining hall, lodge, nature museum, and craft shop provided ample accommodations for the varied activities of the program.

In its first session, the Institute selected 21 students from nine different states and the District of Columbia. Seven came from North Carolina. ... Included in the roster were Service employees, supervisors in city parks and recreation departments, teachers, and college students. They entered into the camp program with almost a missionary zeal, and followed it with that enthusiasm which is the greatest reward of the leader and instructor.

Forenoon field trips were taken to parts of the park for the study of the history of the Swift Creek area, for the collection of specimens, and for the demonstration of techniques of presentation to various groups. Saturdays were occupied with full-day trips, the first being to historic Jamestown, Yorktown, and Williamsburg; the second, a visit to the University of Richmond and a tour of historic places in Richmond; and the third, a boat trip in the Dismal Swamp.

Practice in leadership was provided when Institute students acted as nature leaders for children and adults visiting Swift Creek. Campfires, held about four times a week, were planned by the students, each of whom was given several opportunities to participate in the organization of the evening programs.

POTLUCK

April 12

By Elizabeth Link

The potluck field trip on Saturday, April 12, took 11 bird club members from the Lake Brandt Marina to the Nat Green Trail, then to Peck Elementary School and back to the Bog Garden. The weather was cool and threatened to rain until just after the trip broke up, when it actually did rain. Most of the ducks, cormorants, swallows, and gulls that have been on the lakes lately had taken off in the last week – the Ring-billed Gull noted in the trip list was a single individual. We did have some bright spots, in a pair of Prothonotary Warblers singing dueling songs on the edge of Lake Brandt, along with a single hummingbird, and great looks at the Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on their nests.

Other birds of interest were: Lesser Scaup, Belted Kingfisher, Tree Swallow, Cedar Waxwing and Chipping Sparrow. We saw a total of 47 species.



WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS!

We look forward to sharing our upcoming activities with these new members!

William & Helen Blyshak
Kim Brophy
Karen Gates
Joshua Hoffman



1589-134 Skeet Club Road
High Point, NC 27265
841-2572

433 Pisgah Church Road
Greensboro, NC 27455
282-4458

PBC members get a 10% discount on all regularly priced items in the store - mention your membership **BEFORE** you make a purchase!

PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Individual (\$15.00)___ Family (\$20.00)___ New___ Renewal___

Our fiscal year is from June 1st to May 31st. Mail payment to:

PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB - PO Box 38833 - Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

**ASHE COUNTY
MAY 24**

By Louise Brown

When Herb Hendrickson leads his annual trip to Ashe County in the spring, his primary “target birds” are the Empidonax flycatchers that historically are seen along the New River. The three species found there are the Least, the Acadian, and the Willow Flycatcher. Unfortunately, land along the river is becoming developed for homes, and as the river banks get “cleaned up” their habitat is drastically altered. For the last several years Herb has been unable to find the Least, and the Acadian has become more difficult to find. This year the only one he found was the Willow.

Otherwise, this year’s trip was fine, with a number of other interesting birds. Other flycatchers were the Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, and Eastern Kingbird. Swallow (must be a lot of bugs up there!!) species included the brilliant blue Tree Swallow as well as Barn and Northern Rough-wingeds. Other great finds: Veery, Scarlet Tanager, Orchard and Baltimore Orioles, three species of vireo and six of warblers. There were 51 species in all.



Eastern Phoebe
Photo © by Jason Gould

- WVA, cont' from p.1

magnificent wildflowers along the road, observing plants that had bloomed a month before at lower ground, including *Trillium grandiflorum* in abundance.

That afternoon we visited a farm near “JUJUBLU” in search of a Willow Flycatcher. Although this bird didn’t show, from one spot in an open area within fifteen minutes, we saw a Golden-winged Warbler (a life bird for some), Yellow-breasted Chat, Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, American Goldfinch, Baltimore Oriole, and Eastern Bluebirds. A virtual rainbow of avian colors!

Although sightings were inhibited somewhat by the weather we did manage a respectable list of 90 species during the weekend.



Prothonotary Warbler
Photo © by Lou Skrabec

-- Calendar, cont. from p. 6

Thursday, October 16, 2008

Meeting: The Golden-winged Warbler in Western North Carolina: A Case Study in Conservation. Curtis Smalling, IBA Coordinator and Mountain Program Manager, North Carolina Audubon.

This presentation will outline efforts currently underway to study and protect this Federal Species of Concern, with an emphasis on how the status of this species is indicative of the plight of many other neotropical songbirds. The program will discuss the warbler’s breeding season needs, migration period challenges, and wintering ground requirements.

Bird of the Season: Green Heron, by Janet Goins

Saturday, October 18, 2008

Field Trip: Country Park/Guilford Battleground Park. Meet at 8:00 am at the Orman Street Parking lot by Country Park. Easy walk; no wet areas. We will follow trails through Country Park and Battleground Park. Habitat consists of oak forest and mixed hardwood and pine. Expect to see Bluebirds, Goldfinches, nuthatches. We may catch a glimpse of a Great Blue Heron, a Green Heron and the Pileated Woodpecker. Trip will end around 11:30 am. Leader: Susan Weimer; 288-2160, sweimer@triad.rr.com

Saturday, October 25, 2008

Field Trip: Potluck, TBA

Saturday, November 1, 2008

Field Trip: Miller Park. Meet at 9:00 am at the Queen St. Parking lot in Winston-Salem. “City-slicker” trails; no wet areas. We will follow a compact network of paved trails that wind through hardwoods and pine. This park is a nesting site for Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, Cooper’s Hawks, and the Barred Owl. Expect to see the Brown-headed Nuthatch, Pine Warbler, kinglets, sparrows and other year-round residents. Trip will end around 11:30 am. Bring a picnic lunch or cash to visit a nearby eatery. Leaders: Ann & Chester Robertson; 816-8279, Ann@triad.rr.com

EDUCATOR APPRECIATION DAY

Sunday, September 28th 2008 12:00-3:30 pm

All educators welcome at Carolina Raptor Center for a fun filled day!

- Live raptor presentations all afternoon
- Walk the trails, talk with staff, and meet some of our raptors
- Free environmental education materials for every educator
- Schedule your program that day to receive discounted rate
- Light refreshments provided
- One day only 10% discount in our gift shop
- Door Prizes!



Admission is FREE! (1/2 price for guests)
Must show teacher ID to receive discounts
RSVP by Friday September 26th
704-875-6521 Ext. 207

For more information and directions, visit:
www.carolinaraptorcenter.org

Come visit. Come learn. Come be amazed!

Calendar

Reminder: If you are interested in going on a field trip, always contact the trip leader prior to the trip. That way you will be informed of last minute changes or cancellations, or the leader may need to modify plans according to the number of attendees.

Programs (unless otherwise noted) are at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month, October -- April, at the **Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library**, 1420 Price Park Road, Greensboro. Some members will be present at 6:30, for a chance to have informal meetings and/or socialize before the program.

Saturday, September 13, 2008

Fall Picnic – Hagan-Stone Park, Shelter #6. Nature walk 5:30 p.m.; picnic 6:00 p.m. Bring a covered dish; beverages will be provided. Dane Hill; 674-0951; Susan Weimer; 288-2160, sweimer@triad.rr.com

Saturday, September 20, 2008

Field Trip: Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch. We will visit Pilot Mountain State Park, about 45 minutes away, the best spot in the Piedmont to observe fall hawk migration. We'll also look for warblers on nearby trails. Meet at the Little Pinnacle parking lot at 9:00. Bring lunch. Call or email if you need directions or want to carpool. This is a joint trip with TGP Audubon. Gregg Morris; 883-3270, gregg.morris@highpointnc.gov

Saturday, September 27, 2008

Field Trip: Hamilton Lakes. This local park in a residential section of Greensboro has become a hot spot in the county for neotropical migrants. Leader: Henry Link; 273-4672, linkh@bellsouth.net

CBC Fall Meeting in Wilmington. Join birders from both Carolinas for evening programs and day trips. See the CBC Web site for complete information: <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org>

Saturday, October 4, 2008

Field Trip: Squirrel Spur Rd/Blue Ridge Parkway. Departure will be from the Food Lion parking lot at the junction of Rts. 150 & 220 in Summerfield, NC, at 8:00 am sharp. We will carpool so be sure to sign up in advance!! This is a joint trip with TGP Audubon. Leaders: Julien McCarthy & Judith Pate. Julien's cell: 336-706-9003, Judith's cell: 336-339-5001 (for trip day use only) Home: 336-656-4774 (for pre-trip calls/info.)

Saturday, October 11, 2008

Fall Festival – Bur-Mil Park If you would like to help with the PBC exhibit, please contact Emily Tyler; 375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com

-see *Calendar, cont. on p. 5*



Piedmont Bird Club
PO Box 38833
Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

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