



Red-headed Woodpecker

# The Piedmont Birder

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Newsletter of the  
**Piedmont Bird Club**  
PO Box 38833  
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<http://www.greensboro.com/birdclub>  
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The next deadline for newsletter items is Apr. 15, 2002. I would like to include a phone number and/or e-mail address for leaders and coordinators of any events. Please let me know if you do not want these published in the newsletter or on the website.

Call Louise Brown at 274-3691 or E-mail at [piedmontbirder@aol.com](mailto:piedmontbirder@aol.com).

### Officers

- President:** Emily Tyler  
**Vice President:** Phil Crisp  
**Recording Secretary:** Deirdre Bledsoe  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Barbara Jones  
**Treasurer:** Susan Weimer  
**Members-at-Large:** Lynn Moseley  
 Jean Murphy

## Outer Banks CBC Trip Report by Dennis Burnette



Rough-legged Hawk

Eight Piedmont Bird Club members joined about 155 other birders on the NC Outer Banks for the winter meeting of the two-state Carolina Bird Club over the weekend of January 25-27. All of us got to see great birds that we rarely see in the Piedmont, and several in our group added a new species to their life lists.

It was cloudy, very windy, and cold on Friday, but the weather improved considerably on Saturday and Sunday. Ducks seemed unusually scarce, possibly because the winter has been milder than normal further north and hasn't pushed waterfowl as far south this year. Despite that, there were plenty of birds to see. The preliminary total of all the field trips combined was 172 species by the end of the weekend.

Various of our members visited Lake Mattamuskeet before, during, and after the weekend event. The lucky ones had good looks at a Little Gull early in the weekend, while others of us missed it later. Otherwise, the lake was uncharacteristically devoid of most waterfowl except Tundra Swans, and even these seemed to be in smaller numbers.

Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge was good, as always, but the rarest birds were all at Alligator River NWR on the Dare Co. mainland. While the reported Ash-throated Flycatcher proved elusive for all of us, several of our group got to

-see Outer Banks, p.3

## PEE DEE WILDLIFE REFUGE FIELD TRIP 2/2/02



Red-cockaded Woodpecker

Dennis Burnett led us south to the Pee Dee Wildlife Refuge, where we had traveled as a club for the first time last year.

The refuge is maintained to attract numbers of wintering waterfowl and other wildlife, and is home to a few of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. This woodpecker is the only one to nest in cavities made in live trees, the Long-leaf Pine. As man has intruded on nature, the stands of mature Long-leaf pines have dwindled considerably, severely shrinking the habitat for this particular bird. Trees they have been working on can be spotted by seeing the sap that has dripped from holes. Supposedly this sap deters predators. Unfortunately, we did not get a good look at any of these creatures, although there were stands of trees where they had obviously been working. We did glimpse a woodpecker flying into the pines but even after tramping through briers, we were unable to see it again. "Coulda been...!"

While we were looking for the rare bird, we were treated by the melodious songs of many Pine Warblers, as well as frequent glimpses of their yellow breasts. There were a number of Brown-headed Nuthatches in the trees as well, adding

-see Pee Dee, p.3

## From the President's Perch

by Emily Tyler

What a treat it is to join with other PBC members on a beautiful, crisp February morning for a few hours of birding. On February 16<sup>th</sup>, this was the trip to the Greensboro lakes. Although the waterfowl were not as plentiful as would normally be expected at this time of year, presumably due to the warm winter we have had, we saw 41 species.

Most notable were several male Red-breasted Mergansers in their spectacular breeding plumage. We also saw Gadwall, Buffleheads, Black Ducks, Northern Shovelers, Ruddy Ducks, Ring-necked Ducks and Hooded Mergansers. Land birds included nuthatches, kinglets, finches, a Pine Warbler and four woodpecker species. Raptors included several Red-tailed hawks, a Kestrel and Turkey Vultures.

Several PBC members attended the CBC Winter Meeting on the Outer banks in late January. The total list of birds seen during the weekend will soon be posted on the CBC Website.

If you have not participated in one of these meetings, which consist largely of full- and half-day field trips, I encourage you to attend one. The Spring CBC meeting is in Boone on May 3-5. Contact me or other CBC members for more information, or visit the CBC Website. Our revised membership brochure is being printed and the Membership Committee is seeking volunteers to deliver the brochures to birding outlets, garden and seed centers, and other places where we might reach potential members. Contact Sally Howell or Barbara Jones to offer your help.

Peggy Ferebee is preparing for her April program on "Bird 911" and would like questions from members to help guide her presentation on what should be done when injured or orphaned birds need help. Please email Peggy at: [pferebee@aol.com](mailto:pferebee@aol.com) or call her at 643-6138 with your inquiries.

We extend our sincere sympathies to Barbara Jones and Herb Hendrickson on the loss of their mothers.



## Goshawk at the Zoo

by Dennis Burnette

Five of us made an impromptu trip on Feb. 10 to the NC Zoo in Asheboro to look for the Northern Goshawk that had been reported to Jane Lewis by some of the employees. We were unable to find it.

Jane's husband, Mark, met us in the parking lot and took us through the back gate into the North America section about a half hour before the zoo opened. We walked the short distance to the native duck enclosure in the swamp display, which is adjacent to the lake, where the raptor in question recently had taken a captive clipped-wing Hooded Merganser. (A bird buffet!) Mark reported that the hawk has done this at least once before. Zoo staff members have been seeing it off and on "for a couple of weeks." It was identified as a goshawk by comparing it to images in a bird book based on its size, brown plumage, and pale line over the eye, they said. Jane and Mark got a brief look at a hawk in the area on 2/9/02 that may have been it.

Because of the intermittent drizzle and a heavily overcast sky, we had the area pretty much to ourselves, except for occasional employees and a few brave visitors, for the hour and 45 minutes that we searched for the bird. The only raptors we saw were three Red-shouldered Hawks, including one very vocal bird that looked like an immature.

Other birds were quite active during our search. We spotted at least 22 species without even attempting to look for birds. Although PBC has visited the zoological park itself for years, the group concluded that the zoo grounds should be put on our list of field trips for the future.

We appreciated the efforts that Jane and Mark made to let us know about the bird and to help us look for it.



### INJURED WILDLIFE

If you find injured wildlife you can call:

Theresa 697-9991

Janet 472-7295

After Hours Vet 851-1990

## NEW YEAR'S DAY BIRD WALK 2002



White-crowned Sparrow  
photo by Peter LaTourrette  
N. American Photo Gallery  
<http://www.birdphotography.com>

The first day of the New Year should begin with an auspicious event. For the last three years Sharon Gallimore and her husband Brant have successfully created this good beginning. They hosted a very gracious and delicious brunch, followed by a bird walk in the country. The prime target of the outing was to find the infrequently seen White-crowned Sparrows, which winter in this area.

The habitat we explored was out in the country, open fields and hedgerows. We fortunately saw several White-crowned Sparrows, about four adults and a couple of immatures. At first some of us thought we were hearing White-throated Sparrows being strangled mid-song, but were informed by more experienced birders that this was in fact the song of the White-crowned Sparrow. If the mnemonic phrase used to describe the White-throat's song can be applied, "Pure, Sweet, Peabody Peabody Peabody," the White-crown says "Pure, Sweet, Peabzzzzzt."

In the open fields we saw several Meadowlarks, Red-winged Black Birds, Red-tailed Hawk, Bluebirds and Killdeer. The hedgerows gave shelter to Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Some of the latter were quite excited, possibly wrangling over territory, for they were displaying their red topknots, chattering and carrying on.

A few members spotted a Loggerhead Shrike, now only rarely seen in Guilford County. We were quite satisfied to have seen a total of 29 species, a good number for such a small range, a half-mile stretch of Banning Road.

-Louise Brown



-Calendar, cont' from p. 4.

**• Saturday, April 20**

**Field Trip: Starmount Park** for warblers and other spring migrants. This small park in a local residential area is our best spot for neotropical migrants. Leader: Henry Link. 273-4672

**• Saturday, April 27**

**Adopt-a-Park, 9:00 a.m.** (Rain date Sunday, May 5.) We'll pick up trash around Greensboro Country Park on Lawndale Dr. While there, we'll check the bird boxes to record what species are using them. Coordinator: Cal Weimer. 288-2160

**• Friday-Sunday, May 3-5**

**Carolina Bird Club Spring Meeting,** Asheville, NC. (Most of us will be counting birds in Guilford County this weekend!)

**• Saturday, May 4**

**Spring Bird Count.** Novices are welcome for all or part of the day to count within the designated 15-mile circle. Birding is mostly by car and short hikes. The tally is the next day at 2 p.m at St. Andrews Episcopal Church. Assignments Coordinator: Elizabeth Link 273-4672; Compiler: Don Allen.

**• Saturday, May 18**

**Spring Picnic and Bird Walk,** Greensboro Country Park. Shelter #1. Bird walk, 5:30; dinner, 6:00. (For members who are interested, at 4:30 we will do an informal check of the bird boxes and record what species are using them.). Coordinators: Ann Kelk 656-9879 e-mail:AKelk@GuilfordCenter.com, and Irene Ade 656-9974.

*Address additions*

**New Members:**

Dr. D. G. Fultz

**SPRING HAPPENINGS AT COUNTRY PARK**



These are some of the folks who did the lake cleanup and the birdhouse cleaning in the fall of 2000. We need *you* in the picture for 2002!! -photo by Cal Weimer

Give a little to your community!

Our project is helping maintain and monitor the Bluebird nest boxes at Country Park off Lawndale Drive, and twice a year picking up some trash there. Cal Weimer (288-2160) is in charge of this project. March 23 we will be checking nest boxes, and on April 27 picking up trash and doing another nest check. There is good birding at the park as well, species including a variety of waterfowl, resident Pileated Woodpeckers as well as a host of other large and small species. It's a lovely spot to spend a morning or afternoon.

On Saturdays the park is closed to vehicle traffic, so we meet at the parking lot near the north end of the park. Turn off Lawndale Drive onto Orman Road; drive to the end of Orman and turn left, go to the open parking lot, and you will see us there. Look for Cal's red Ford pickup with a canopy. (At 9:00 AM on park event dates.)

*-Outer Banks, cont' from p. 1*

see both Western Kingbird and Rough-legged Hawk. Other highlights included several Peregrine Falcons and Merlins, and Emily Tyler reported seeing both at about the same time!



*-Pee Dee, cont' from p. 1*

their delightful "squeaky toy" vocals into the mix. Yellow-rumped Warblers, Chickadees, Titmice and Kinglets were also active in the branches above. We saw over 40 species. Woodpeckers seen were Red-bellied, Downy, Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and several Red-headed, who were chattering and with each other around Gaddy's Pond. The open fields of the refuge were habitat for a number of Northern Harriers, Kestrels, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks. We did not see as many waterfowl as we had hoped to, but at Gaddy's Pond there were a number of wood ducks, Green-winged Teal and Mallards.

Before we got to the refuge, we stopped at a bridge from which we could see a dam on Badin Lake. From this terrific vantage point, just downstream from the dam, we saw a huge assembly of Great Blue Herons- at least 95! There were also a number of Ring-billed Gulls, and nearby perched in a tree was a Bald Eagle. Phil Kellam, who had suggested stopping at the bridge, says he has seen a pair there every time he has stopped.

-Louise Brown



**PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL**

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual \_\_\_ Family \_\_\_ New \_\_\_  
Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Note: One year's dues are payable from May through December, \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families.  
Mail Payment to: PBC, Box 38833, Greensboro, 27438-8833

**Check out our web site!**  
It has some previous field trip reports, links to other sites of interest to birders and also our Calendar of Events.  
<http://www.greensboro.com/birdclub>

# Calendar

**Reminder:** If you are interested in going on a field trip, always contact the Leader prior to the trip. If the Leader receives no calls, the trip may be cancelled.

• **Saturday, March 2**

**Field Trip: A&T Farm. Meet at 8 a.m.** Easy hike around a farm pond and along the edge of wet woodland. Always a good trip, this is our best site for Common Snipe. Wear water-resistant shoes, dress in layers. Leader: Emily Tyler 375-5770 e-mail: ettyler@triad.rr.com.

• **Saturday, March 16**

**Field Trip: NC Zoo.** We will visit the Reynolds Aviary and other areas that house the zoo's bird collection. Bring money for the entrance fee and lunch. Leader: Louise Brown 274-3691 e-mail: piedmontbirder@aol.com.

• **Thursday, March 21, 7:30 p.m.**

**MEETING: Population Trends of House Finches in the Past Sixty Years in the US and NC.** Speaker: Herb Hendrickson, Ph.D., professor emeritus in the biology department at UNCG. Dr. Hendrickson has been doing research for the past fifteen years on the House Finch. The numbers have been declining in recent years along the east coast, and the eastern and western populations of this species have come together in Kansas. Dr. Hendrickson will share the highlights of his research on these and other interesting discoveries.

*Bird of the Season:* Diving Birds - Forster's Tern (presenter to be announced)

• **Saturday, March 23**

**Nest Check and Bird Walk, Greensboro Country Park, 9:00 a.m.** We will do an informal "walk" to make sure that the nest boxes are ready for their new spring tenants. While there, we'll do some birding. (This is not an Adopt-a-Park trash pick-up day.) Contact: Cal Weimer. . 288-2160

• **Friday-Sunday, March 29-31 (Happy Easter!)**

**Field Trip: Savannah, Georgia** area, including Savannah and Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuges. Contact trip leaders for details.

Leaders: Dennis and Lynn Burnette. 299-4342 e-mail: burnetted@aol.com / mlburnette@aol.com

• **Saturday, April 6**

**Field Trip: Mason Farm and NC Botanical Garden.** We will look for early migrants, wildflowers and butterflies in Chapel Hill.

Bring money for lunch at a local restaurant. Leader: Dennis Burnette. 299-4342 mail: burnetted@aol.com

• **Thursday, April 18**

**MEETING: Bird 911.** Speaker: Peggy Ferebee, Curator of Animals at the Natural Science Center. This program should help all of us who get calls from neighbors, family, co-workers and friends about orphaned and injured birds. Peggy fields these types of questions regularly and will share typical calls she receives as well as answer our questions. She will also provide the names of other resources in the area that can provide assistance.

*Bird of the Season:* Diving Birds - Brown Pelican (presenter to be announced)

-continued on page 3



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