



The Piedmont Birder

Newsletter of the Piedmont Bird Club

Nov. 2007 – Jan. 2008, Volume 18,
No. 4

Newsletter of the

Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833

Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

piedmontbirdclub.org

Editor: Louise Brown

Committee Members: Diana Bowman,
Emily Tyler, Denise Poulos, George
Wheaton, Melissa Whitmire

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*Field Trip

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

Contact Louise Brown: 685-5043;
piedmontbirder@triad.rr.com.

OFFICERS FOR 2007-2008

President: Susan Weimer

Vice President: Beth Bursuck

Recording

Secretary: Diana Bowman

Corresponding

Secretary: Peggy Ware

Treasurer: Lary Treanor

Members-at-Large: Don Allemann

Jim Strickland

Past President Dan Chambers

HAWK WATCH AT PILOT MOUNTAIN

9/15-30/07

by John Haire

If this year's hawk counting could be summarized in a phrase, it might be "quality over quantity." Broad-winged Hawks, the most numerous migrants during our count period, were down significantly from prior years' average, 1,200 this year vs. 3,800. This could be due to a couple of factors: that the birds simply may have been elsewhere, or that the weather conditions made hawk-spotting difficult. Ideally, a fairly clear horizon and significant high cloud cover provide good background for seeing far-off birds, but that did not occur for more than a few hours over the 16-day count period. Instead, there were generally clear blue skies overhead, often with haze on the horizon, and the few times there was significant cloud cover, it was so low that visibility was limited.

Results were much better for the 11 other species of raptors.

Raptor	2007 ct.	Past avg.
Broad-winged Hawk	1200	3800
Turkey Vulture	1	19
Osprey	27	26
Northern Harrier	8	8
Red-tailed Hawk	21	22
Merlin	3	2
Black Vulture	20	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	64	44
Cooper's Hawk	38	23
Peregrine Falcon	11	6
Bald Eagle	25	7
Red-shouldered Hawk	12	6

- See Hawk, cont.' on p. 4

POTLUCK TRIP TO HARVEY'S KNOB

10/6/07

by George Wheaton

Two intrepid members of the PBC sallied forth to Harvey's Knob on the Blue Ridge Parkway north of Roanoke. A threatening gray and foggy morning turned into a warm and sunny afternoon. The birds responded accordingly, putting on a show in early to mid-afternoon. Highlights of the 56 species recorded (with the help of a little padding on the trip back to Greensboro) included: Peregrine Falcon, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The find of the day, however, was a large (50 or more birds) mixed flock of migrating passerines that contained at least 11 species of wood warbler. These jewels included Golden-winged, Cape May (a few), Blackburnian, Bay-breasted (several), and Tennessee (many). A low canopy provided knock-out looks at these fall travelers.

This new "Potluck" field trip format involves the leader choosing the location at the last moment, hoping to pick up on birding that is "ripe" and not predictable in advance.



Broad-winged Hawk
Photo by Wayne Boone

**From the
PRESIDENT'S PERCH**

By Susan Weimer

Since the Piedmont Bird Club (PBC) is a non-profit organization, the Executive Board has voted to disburse the sum of Two-Thousand-Five-Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) for charitable, environmental causes. All recipients must be registered with the Internal Revenue Service as Charitable Organizations (with the exception of the students) The following items were approved by the PBC Exec. Board on 8/10/07.

Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC) has requested \$500.00 for trees to be planted in the Price Park Bird & Butterfly Meadow.	500.00
Piedmont Land Conservancy. Dennis Burnett has requested \$300.00 for signage in the area to be designated as the Meadowlark Meadow.	300.00
Dennis Burnett has requested funding for wildflower seed for the Meadowlark Meadow at Price Park to encourage the birds to stay and continue to breed. To coordinate w/ PLC.	300.00
Lynn Moseley has requested funding for 2 of her Guilford College students to do independent study in the field of biology/ecology. The request is for \$200 each.	400.00
Herb Hendrickson has requested that \$500.00 be sent to the Tortoise Reserve in Bladen County, NC for the preservation of the habitat of +/- 100 bird species as well as endangered turtles.	500.00
Piedmont Wildlife Rehab, Melissa Coe, to assist injured birds & small mammals back into the wild.	250.00
Kathleen Clay Edwards Library	100.00
To Be Determined	150.00
TOTAL	2500.00

On October 6, 2007, four 50-pound bags of bird seed were delivered to Hagan-Stone Park as a donation from the Piedmont Bird Club to feed the birds. The bags were purchased from the T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society during their annual Fall Sale.

!! Alert !!

**Save
The Haw River State Park**

It is threatened by development and we need you to write to the Guilford County Commissioners and the developer located in Boca Raton, FL to let them know that the citizens are opposed to this development. Write to: Guilford County Commissioners, Box 3427, Greensboro, NC 27402 and the developer, Mr. John Maloney, Jr., President and CEO, Bluegreen Corporation, 4960 Conference Way North, Boca Raton, FL 33431

!! Alert !!



THE LINE UP: Some of the volunteers who helped with the Fall Festival at Bur-Mil Park were: Sally Howell, Carolyn Allen, Jane Ariail, William Lawrence, Huiming Yu, and Emily Tyler. Photo by Susan Weimer



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!

Who are we? We are the Piedmont Bird Club and this is what we stand for:

Protecting the environment

Intense

Energetic

Determined

Monitoring blue bird boxes

Ornithologists

Nature lovers

Tree-huggers

Bird watchers

Identifying birds

Rewarding

Dedicated

Conservation-minded

Looking for birds

Unbeatable

Binoculars-buddies

- Susan Weimer



Is this really a bird?

Yes, indeed -

a Whip-poor-will.

© by Melissa Whitmire

PILOT MOUNTAIN FIELD TRIP

9/22/07

by Gregg Morris

A small group of three bird club members, including one all the way from Fayetteville, took part in a joint PBC/TGPAS trip to Pilot Mountain to watch for (and count) migrating raptors. The variety was decent, with nine species identified, but the numbers were disappointingly low, especially this close to the normal peak of fall Broad-winged migration. We counted only 47 of these long-distance migrants, as well as five Sharpies, three Cooper's, two Kestrels and one each Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle and Osprey. Fog early in the day limited visibility, and when the weather cleared, birds might have been lost in the deep, blue sky. Alternatively, any number could have snuck by hidden in the haze obscuring the Blue Ridge.

Fittingly enough, as warblers are also in migration at this time of year, the hawk watchers spotted several, including Hooded, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Black and White and Bay-breasted. A Pine Warbler and a Red-breasted Nuthatch provided excellent shows in the pines edging Little Pinnacle on the south.

All in all, it was a good day, as most days at Pilot Mountain are, and it was nice to see old friends and acquaintances from Forsyth County and the Sandhills.



THANKSGIVING TRIP

Don & Carolyn Allen and Emily Tyler will be leading the trip over the holiday to the OBX. This is always great for wintering waterfowl and other birds, as well as great coastal dining! We've shared many wonderful Thanksgiving feasts with our wonderful birding friends! Specifics are still being worked out but Carolyn has made tentative arrangements with a volunteer at the NWR at Pea Island to lead us to the South Pond area, which is ordinarily closed. Keep your ears open if you are interested in coming. Info about lodging and gathering will come soon.

Don and Carolyn Allen, 288-3045, tex-allenn@c@aol.com and Emily Tyler, 375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com.



Holiday Dinner & Members' Slide Show



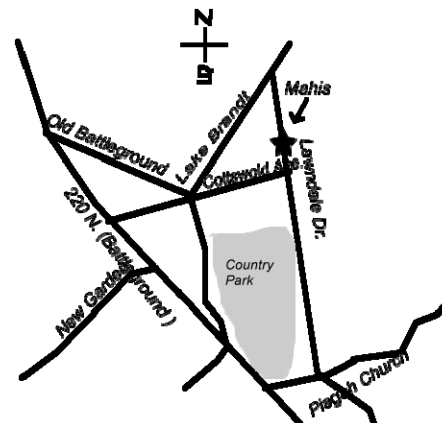
Our dinner will be on **Thursday, December 6, 6:00 p.m.** at Mahi's Seafood Restaurant, 4721 Lawndale Dr., Greensboro. It will be a buffet dinner. The price, including tax and gratuity, is \$15.00. Make checks to the PBC. You can mail them in, give them to the treasurer at the Nov. meeting, or at the dinner. Clare does need to be able to tell the restaurant how many people will be there two weeks in advance, so let her know if you are planning to come by Thurs, Nov. 22. Program: Members' Slide Show. You may bring up to 25 slides of nature-oriented subjects. Dinner Coordinator: Clare McSwain, 282-2834, velvetcrush@triad.rr.com. Slide Show Coordinator: Lynn Moseley, 316-2258, lmosley@guilford.edu

Reservations are required. Please make them by Thurs, Nov. 22.

If you have any birdy items you'd like to donate for door prizes or table favors

at the Holiday Dinner, please contact **Clare McSwain**, Social Committee Chair; 282-2834, velvetcrush@triad.rr.com

Mahi's is in a shopping center near the intersection of Lawndale Drive and Cotswood, in the Northwest section of Greensboro.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

October 2007

by Emily Tyler

During the past few weeks the Education Committee has reached out to many people in the community to share information about the Club and our feathered friends. In early September, Carolyn Allen, using slides Don had taken over the years, presented a program to the Ivy Garden Club with

cont.' →

THE SUMMIT/HAW RIVER STATE PARK FIELD TRIP

10/20/07

by Sue Cole

Eleven Piedmont Bird Club and Pearson Audubon folks met at The Summit. The weather couldn't have been better, starting at 60 degrees and climbing to 70, with a nice breeze and dappled sunshine in the fall-colored woods. We explored a trail that runs off the Chapel area, through the disc golf course, down and up ravines to an overgrown meadow, then on to the meadow up from the lake. Lastly, we walked around the lake and back up to the parking lot.

We had some nice bird sightings with 20 species counted. Two Red-headed Woodpeckers gave us a good look. Of course the Red-bellied, Flicker, and Downy Woodpeckers were around, along with a Hairy Woodpecker and the call of the Pileated. We were thrilled with the fattest Common Yellowthroat any of us had ever seen. He posed and took a good look at us. We saw Black Vultures, up to 19, circling with a few Turkey Vultures above. A Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawk were sighted. A White-throated Sparrow and Song Sparrow were busy in the bushes of the meadow.

We also had some non-bird sightings that drew our attention. The orb-building spiders were out in abundance, and we saw some beautiful ones. Not spiders we had seen before, so now we need to carry a spider guide book. Ann Walters-Fromson took some pictures which she may be able to show us some day.

We saw two deer and came across some unusual scat, definitely not deer. It was decided that it was from a coyote. Sorry, no picture. There's probably a scat guide book too.



- Ed. Com., cont.' →

about 20 in attendance. On October 3 Lynn Moseley and Emily Tyler were back at our former meeting place, the Congregational United Church of Christ, where the topic was "Greensboro is for the Birds." 26 church members were present.

On October 13 from 10 to 3 several PBC members pitched in to staff our exhibit at the Fall Festival at Bur-Mil Park. Those who covered at least one shift included: Carolyn Allen, Don Allemann, Jane Ariail, Sally Howell, Bill Lawrence and Huiming Yu, Jim Strickland, Emily Tyler and Susan Weimer.

- See Ed. Com., cont.' p. 4

FROM THE PBC ARCHIVES

By Susan Weimer, History and Archives Chair

PRESENTATION OF THE 1964 YEAR BOOK TO MARGARET Y. WALL
BY ETTA SCHIFFMAN, OCTOBER 15, 1964

At the first meeting this fall of the executive board of the Piedmont Bird Club, the subject of dedicating our current year book was brought up. It was suggested, that instead of dedicating the book to any person, there be no dedication, but that because of our interest in conservation, the cover and one page be devoted to commemorating the fate of the passenger pigeon. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the last passenger pigeon, and Brad Hawkins had already made this beautiful cover design featuring the bird.

As a matter of fact, that no-dedication bit turned out to be a red herring designed to throw someone off the scent. Our real "pigeon" is someone who sat there at the board meeting and innocently voted for the project. She still doesn't know that the board, because of her long and unstinting work in behalf of the Club, voted secretly, behind her back, you might say, to dedicate this year's book to one of the staunchest pillars of the club.

Margaret Wall, you are our "pigeon." Please come and be the first to receive a copy of the Piedmont Bird Club's 1964-65 year book.

WINSTON-SALEM WWTP

8/25/07

by Louise Brown

Dan Chambers did another great job of leading our field trip to the Archie Elledge Waste Water Treatment Plant in Winston-Salem. We had a nice group, about a dozen PBC members. This has traditionally been a good location for shorebirds in late summer, and we were not disappointed. We had a modest but respectable selection consisting of Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, and Solitary, Spotted, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers. We studied them for a while, trying to digest the subtle differences of the non-breeding plumages. The Spotted, for instance, is no longer spotted! There were not many other water birds except a Green and a Great Blue Heron, some Mallards and amazingly, a couple of Wood Ducks which oddly had not been run off by a worker diligently mowing the banks of the sludge ponds.

The only raptor we saw was a Cooper's Hawk. There were some Turkey Vultures but they are no longer considered to be true raptors. There were a couple of flycatchers, a Phoebe and a pair of Eastern Pewees which we tried hard to make into an Empidonax specie. (George Wheaton brought us down to earth on that one!) There were lingering summer birds, Indigo Buntings and a Blue Grosbeak, and a few Cedar Waxwings. One unexpected sighting was a Common Raven. There were 40 bird species noted in all.

We saw a number of butterflies, the

→ *cont'*

- *Ed. Com., cont.' from p. 3*

Thanks to all who helped fulfill our purpose in promoting the study and protection of birds and other natural resources. It never ceases to amaze us how much some young children know about birds! Somebody is doing something right. We counted 211 people who stopped by the exhibit long enough to take our bird trivia quiz or to engage in discussion about birds as one of our natural resources.

The posters prepared with Melissa Whitmire's stunning photos are now shared with the visitors to the Bog Garden, Country Park, Bur-Mil Park, Price Park (Bird and Butterfly Garden) and with the Girl Scouts. The most recent poster features the White-throated Sparrow. It will be worth your while to stop by one of these places to view this poster as well as the one showing several other birds seen at this time of the year.



- *W-S WWTP, cont.'*

most interesting being a Tawny Emperor which hitched rides on a couple of members. It sat on Carolyn Allen's elbow for quite a while, and then moved to Jim Strickland's back, staying with us long enough for some good photos!



Tawny Emperor
Photo © by Louise
Brown

While we tried to count only migrating raptors, it's possible that some of these birds are now local residents, which in itself could be significant, especially for Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. The final results are posted at www.hawkcount.org.

Non-raptor observations included a possible Snowy Egret, flocks of Cormorants, several Red-breasted Nuthatches, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Wild Turkeys and a Great Horned Owl. Sixteen species of warblers, often in good numbers, were observed: Tennessee, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Palm, Bay-breasted, American Redstart, Worm-eating, Ovenbird and Hooded. Other migrant passerines included Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Scarlet Tanagers. Little Pinnacle seems to be an overlooked fall warbler hotspot, especially in afternoon, when the north side of the mountain gets cold, and the sun is still shining on the south side of the mountain.

More than 100 birders signed in for a shift during the Hawk Watch and hundreds more casual walk-up visitors expressed interest. Groups from the Reedy Creek Nature Center in Charlotte, the Sandhills Nature Preserve in Moore County, and the Piedmont Bird Club and Pearson Audubon Society in Greensboro came during field trips.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who took a shift compiling or who signed up and helped observe. There are too many to name, but special thanks to Forsyth Audubon President Phil Dickinson, previous season count coordinators Toby Gordon and Dan Chambers, data coordinator Shelley Rutkin, and day count coordinators and observers Phil Crisp, Linda Davis, Scott DePue, Jim Martin, Julien McCarthy, Gregg Morris, Ron Morris, Tara O'Leary, Ann Robertson and Sue Rupp.

I hope everyone enjoyed their time at Little Pinnacle and that all will come back again next year!



**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS!**

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

NEW MEMBERS

Davis, William & Julia

Haire, John

Ostrowski, Judith A.



AN AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER was sighted (thanks to Elizabeth and Henry Links) on October 20 & 21 near where the eagle's nest is on the upper reaches of Lake Brandt.



-- Calendar, cont.' from p. 6

Saturday, December 15

Christmas Bird Count — Teams will count birds in assigned areas within the designated 15-mile circle. Some teams need new counters for all or part of the day, and new birders are welcome.

Mostly riding or mostly walking, depending on team assignment. Bring a hot drink and binoculars; dress for weather. The tally is the following afternoon at 2 p.m. at St. Andrews Episcopal Church. Compiler: Herb Hendrickson; Assignments Coordinator: Elizabeth Link, 273-4672, baddogj@yahoo.com

Saturday, January 5, 2008

Field Trip: Mears' Fork Trail. This is a joint field trip with TGP Audubon to an area that includes bluffs and the Mears Fork floodplain, in Summerfield, with one major tributary entering the Fork. We expect to see the typical winter and water Piedmont birds. The walking is moderately strenuous, along a somewhat hilly mile and a half trail made by ORVs. It might be very wet in places, so wear appropriate footwear. Leaders:

Jack Jezorek, 272-6664, sue-jackj@bellsouth.net; Gregg Morris, 883-3270, gregg.morris@highpointnc.gov.

Saturday, January 12

Field Trip: Winter birds, Greensboro Landfill at the end of White Street.

The trip leader will make special arrangements for our birding group to enter this facility where her bird count team has spotted several species of sparrows, raptors, both species of vultures, and other interesting birds in past winters. We'll meet in the parking lot of the Congregational United Church of Christ at 8:30 a.m. to car pool. This is important so that our birding group's cars will not interfere with the trucks that are the regular traffic at the landfill. We also will have an opportunity to consolidate further at the parking area at the landfill Office. Leader: Carolyn Allen, 288-3045, texallennc@aol.com

Thursday, January, 17

Meeting: Birds of Hawaii, Doug Pratt & John Bowles. This will be a 50-year retrospective on the birds of Hawaii and changes in bird populations there. John grew up in Hawaii and began a survey of bird populations of the area. Twenty years later Doug Pratt, an internationally known ornithologist and author, continued this study and has added to it in recent years. One of his many accomplishments is the writing and illustration of A Field Guide to Birds of Hawaii. He also has illustrated many plates for the National Geographic Society's Field Guide to Birds of North America and numerous other publications.

Bird of the Season: Great Horned Owl
January, 19-21 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend)

Field Trip: Highland County, VA

We will travel northwest to the Bluegrass Valley in Highland County, VA. This area, north of Monterey, is sometimes referred to as the Little Switzerland of Virginia. It is scenic and wild indeed. The birds that winter in this mountainous area will be our targets. Possibilities include: Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Rough-legged Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Black-capped Chickadee, Horned Lark, and a variety of winter finches. (In years past these have included Purple Finch, Evening Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, etc.) With good luck we may even stumble across Red Crossbills or an American Tree Sparrow! Birding will be done at feeders and along roadsides. Saturday departure time and place to be determined. Leader: George Wheaton, 336-540-8953(h), 336-392-3652(c), gcwheaton@earthlink.net

February 1-3

CBC Meeting: Georgetown, SC, See the CBC Web site for complete information: www.carolinabirdclub.org

Saturday, February 2

Field Trip: Potluck #3. Leader: Henry Link, 273-4672, linkh@bellsouth.net



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

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



This year we are introducing a new kind of trip: **Potluck**. These are spur-of-the-moment trips with no previously set destination. It will be more important than ever to contact the trip leader in advance to express your interest in participating so you may be informed of the exact itinerary and meeting place.



Saturday, November 3

Adopt-a-Park: Members will improve the environment by picking up trash at Greensboro Country Park. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot that can be reached by turning onto Orman Road from Lawndale, and then turning left at the intersection. (Rain date: Nov. 4 at 2:30 p.m.) Leader: Cal Weimer. 288-2160, cweimer@triad.rr.com

Saturday, November 10

Field Trip: Bird Walk at the Bog Garden. Meet at the garden at 8:30 a.m. To date, our club has identified 126 species at this great little wetland. Leader: Louise Brown, 685-5043, piedmontbirder@triad.rr.com

Thursday, November 15

Meeting: Birds of Nicaragua, by Lynn Moseley & Ann Walter-Fromson. In March of 2006 and 2007, Lynn took students on an ecotour to Nicaragua for bird banding at a shade-grown coffee plantation in the Matagalpa region. Shade-grown coffee provides needed habitat for neotropical birds, many of which migrate to or through NC. Lynn and Ann will describe their activities in Nicaragua and discuss the role of shade-grown coffee in maintaining healthy bird populations.

Bird of the Season: Cooper's Hawk

November 22-25 (Thanksgiving Weekend)

Field Trip: North Carolina Outer Banks.

Leaders: Don and Carolyn Allen, 288-3045, texallennc@aol.com and Emily Tyler, 375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com.

Saturday, December 1

Field Trip: Potluck #2. Leader: Lynn Moseley, 316-2258, lmoseley@guilford.edu

Thursday, December 6

Annual Holiday Dinner and Members' Slide Show. To be held at Mahi's Seafood Restaurant, 4721 Lawndale Dr., Greensboro, 6:00 p.m.. Reservations required. Program: Members' Slide Show. You may bring up to 25 slides of nature-oriented subjects. Dinner Coordinator: Clare Mc Swain, 282-2834, velvetcrush@triad.rr.com. Slide Show Coordinator: Lynn Moseley, 316-2258, lmoseley@guilford.edu



Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833

Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

Label here

DON'T FORGET!!!
Make your reservations for
the
Holiday Dinner (by Nov. 22)



More details page 3