



The Piedmont Birder

Newsletter of the Piedmont Bird Club

Nov. 2008 –Jan. 2009 Vol. 19, No. 4
Newsletter of the

Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833

Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

piedmontbirdclub.org

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Emily Tyler, George Wheaton, Melissa
Whitmire

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*Field Trip

The next deadline for newsletter items
is Jan. 15, 2009.

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

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

COUNTRY / BATTLE-GROUND MILITARY PARK

10/18/08 *By Susan Weimer*

It was a beautiful day in the neighborhood. Competition from the marathon was minor and luckily the runners did not follow the trails we did. Nine hearty souls, ten including the trip leader, Susan Weimer, showed up to brave the chilly day. We were treated to early morning fog rising from the lower lake at Country Park. We saw the normal ducks and geese and had a Green Heron pose for us at the end of the trip. We started at the Orman Street Parking Lot and headed for the Veteran's Memorial because the "Hidden Trail" is located behind the Veteran's Memorial. This trail is where an owl has been heard and was glimpsed briefly by Cal Weimer. We did not get to see it on this trail, but an owl-like bird was spotted later on the trip flying in the vicinity. We concluded that it probably was a Great Horned Owl.

The "Hidden Trail" is a connector between Country Park and Battleground Park. We ended up at a large, grassy, open area that yielded sightings of a Junco, Pine Warblers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Northern Flickers, Towhees, Red-bellied Woodpeckers and a Hairy Woodpecker. As we cut through the lower open field, we spotted a large hawk. The consensus of the group was that it was an immature Red-tailed Hawk.

At a rest stop on the wooded trails, a Hermit Thrush, some Blue-headed Vireos and Ruby-crowned Kinglets

- see Park, cont' on p. 5

PILOT MOUNTAIN

9/20/08 *By Gregg Morris*

Only a few members attended the joint PBC/TGPAS field trip to Pilot Mountain to observe migrating hawks this year. The low turnout was similar to that of the previous year. The weather, though, was rather different. In contrast to 2007, when visibility was essentially zero for a substantial portion of the day, visibility this year was fair, with some haze along the Blue Ridge. There was enough cloud cover to provide a good backdrop for high-flying raptors. Unfortunately, the hoped-for huge, swirling kettles of Broad-winged Hawks failed to appear and neither did most other species, at least in any numbers. The count for the day was 230 Broad-winged Hawks, five Ospreys, two Bald Eagles, two Sharp-shinned Hawks, two Red-shouldered Hawks, one Red-tailed Hawk and one American Kestrel, and, as a nice touch, two Peregrine Falcons, for a total of 245 identified birds. Phil Dickinson from Forsyth Audubon was the official recorder for the day.

Forsyth Audubon sponsors the annual September count at Pilot Mountain, which has at least two purposes. The first of these is citizen science. Daily counts and related data such as temperatures, barometric pressure and wind direction and speed are reported to a national web page affiliated with the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Education is a second purpose. Daily numbers are written on a large dry erase board, and there is an accompanying display with photographs of several raptor species and other pertinent information. Both draw a lot of interest from casual tourists on Little

-- see Hawk, cont. on p. 2

From the PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Susan Weimer

The winter birds are here! More and more Juncos and White-throated Sparrows are making their appearance. The temperatures are also keeping up with the winter birds.

Our first program, in October, presented by Curtis Smalling on the Golden-winged Warbler in western North Carolina, was very informative. Curtis presented his scientific findings in a very interesting manner. My thanks go to Lynn Moseley for providing the Club with such a knowledgeable presenter.

This meeting was the inception of our plan to meet at 6:30 p.m. to socialize and "talk about birds." This was extremely successful. My thanks go to Pat Bradley, Julien McCarthy and Jean Murdick for bringing this idea to reality. It was really good to see so many people enthusiastic about discussing bird sightings, conservation issues, funny stories and photo opportunities. The Piedmont Bird Club has many talented people.

Speaking of talented people, I urge all of you to return your membership survey to Julien McCarthy. You can get a copy of the survey on our website at: http://piedmontbirdclub.org/membership_survey.htm. We want to serve you in the best way possible, and completing this survey and returning it will be a great help.

I am looking forward to seeing you at future meetings, field trips or at the Holiday Dinner.



-- Hawk, cont. from p. 1

Pinnacle, and they in turn become the targets of a low-level campaign to impart details on raptors, raptor migration and raptor conservation. Volunteers are always welcome to help in this effort. Consider joining us next year.



SOME BIRDS ONE MIGHT SEE ON THE THANKSGIVING TRIP



Black-necked Stilt
© by Melissa Whitmire



Tundra Swan
© Dan Chambers



American Oystercatcher
© Emily Tyler

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND TRIP TO NC COASTAL PLAIN, OUTER BANKS, AND WILDLIFE REFUGES Thursday -Sunday, November 27-30

Mission: At a comfortable pace and in a socially enjoyable atmosphere, participants will observe the migratory and indigenous waterfowl populations of North Carolina's Coastal Plain, Outer Banks, and National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). Infrequent, incidental, or rare sightings occur in these areas, the most likely places on the Eastern Seaboard for such events. Less experienced birders and new members will be given a helping hand by the more seasoned member among us.

Destinations: Pea Island NWR, Alligator River NWR, Mattamuskeet NWR, Pocosin Lakes NWR (tentative), Petti-grew St. Park (tentative).

Accommodations: Participants will room in local motels near or in Manteo, NC. Details for communications with motels can be obtained from the trip leaders.

Meals/Provisions: Suppers will be optionally communal at local restaurants after each day's activity. Other meals and snacks will be the sole responsibility of each participant. Lunch will usually be picnic style.

Weather: While this area is usually comfortably warm to cool in November, come prepared for possible cold and/or wet weather.

General: All activities and schedules are subject to change due to weather constraints. Participation is optional daily and members may arrive and depart on any day. Prepare yourselves in advance because daily excursions will leave promptly as per schedule. Distances will be traveled in vehicles with stops for short walks to observation points.

Carpooling will be the order of the day!! A **detailed trip itinerary** will be distributed to each participant upon sign-up either by mail or by e-mail, dependent upon your request. Call or e-mail leaders for answers/discussion.

This will be an exciting and informative expedition. Come and enjoy one another's company as we explore these spectacular environments.

Trip Leaders: Emily Tyler, 336-375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com
Gregg Morris, 336-883-3270, gregg.morris@highpointnc.gov
Julien McCarthy, 336-656-4774, jbm@triad.rr.com



MUSHROOM WALK

10/4/08

By Louise Brown

Since the PBC/TGPA Field Trip to the Blue Ridge Parkway unfortunately had to be cancelled at the last minute, an alternate was offered in the form of a "Mushroom Walk" at my place in Randolph County. After all the recent rains, the most interesting mushrooms and fungi have been appearing. Nine people came; most of them members of both organizations. No one was disappointed. While none of us was very knowledgeable about mushrooms or fungi we were quite impressed with their abundance, and variety of colors, shapes and sizes. There were some that were like tiny orange fingers, poking up out of the leafy detritus in the woods, some very small red-capped mushrooms, and lots of bigger ones of all colors.



Photo by Peggy Ware



Straight-branched Coral
Photo By Louise Brown



Photo By Louise Brown



About three inches high
Photo By Louise Brown



Chicken Mushroom
This was over a foot wide
Photo By Louise Brown



Bearded Tooth
About 6" wide, growing on a live ma-

WINSTON-SALEM WWTP

8/23/08

By Louise Brown

A nice group of people turned out to go to the Archie Ellege Waste-Water Treatment Plant in Winston-Salem, one of the best spots in the Piedmont to look for migrating shore birds. There was only a modest group of them feeding in the sludge pond that day, including Killdeer, Spotted, Semipalmated, and Least Sandpiper. A variety of other birds made up for the lack of shorebirds: a Cooper's Hawk, which has been seen there before; several flycatchers including Eastern Phoebe, Great-crested Flycatcher and Eastern Kingbird, which appeared part of a family group. We also saw some Indigo Buntings, a Blue Grosbeak, and a Raven.

Some other birders from Winston-Salem showed up and told us that they had been to [Bethabara Park](#), also in W-S, where they had seen some rarely seen warblers, so we made a spontaneous jaunt over there. Most of us had not been to that park before and were quite delighted with it. We heard a White-eyed Vireo and a Hooded Warbler, but not the other birds we had hoped for. Nevertheless, there is great habitat along a path that runs through the woods alongside a creek.

[Bethabara Park](#) is on the site of Moravian settlement which was established in the mid-1700s. The park features some restored buildings and the ruins of others, and is quite interesting in its own right.

We saw 41 species of birds that day, and learned about a great new place!



PBC member Scott DePue was delighted to find this Lincoln's Sparrow in his yard in mid-October – John Haire took this photo.

FROM THE PBC ARCHIVES

By Susan Weimer, History and Archives Chair

Thomas Gilbert Pearson - Untiring Protector of Birds

From the Fourteenth Ward Lecture by Albert Linton given at Guilford College on January 17, 1964

Energy and ability – these two words characterize Thomas Gilbert Pearson whose life and work we contemplate today. His entire mature life was devoted with a remarkable singleness of purpose to the protection of wild life – birds in particular. The privilege of enjoying a number of beautiful birds is ours today because of their having been saved from destruction by the work of this unusual man.

Pearson's powerful driving urge to protect bird life led to the passage of many laws which put an end to the appalling disgraceful slaughter of song and other non-game birds. To have an urge to do something without the necessary know-how is to be ineffective and frustrated. Gilbert Pearson overcame that obstacle by developing a keen political sense. Indeed he acquired a rare skill in the practice of the art of the possible, as politics is frequently described. For in the field of conservation it is necessary to sense what it is possible to accomplish amid the crossfire of opposing forces.

More often than not the middle of the road must be occupied so that one becomes the target of brickbats from each side. Many times Pearson found himself attacked on the one hand by the hunters who wanted unlimited license to kill and on the other by ardent no-compromise conservationists who objected to his seeking the support of men who shot for sport. Such men had no intention of giving up the shooting of game birds. However, they recognized that unlimited license would lead to the complete destruction of their sport and therefore supported reasonable bag limits and reasonable "open seasons." Furthermore, they promoted methods of protecting and developing adequate breeding areas for game birds....

A major problem in seeking legislation to protect wild life is the apathy of the people, especially when the new laws would alter established practices such as the widespread, long-standing practice of shooting all kinds of birds. An acute question was where to get the money to pay the wardens needed to enforce the proposed laws. Pearson made the unprecedented proposal that persons coming from other states to hunt game birds be charged license fees which would be paid to the Audubon Society of North Carolina which in turn would engage and pay the wardens. Despite its revolutionary character the bill made progress and was supported by the Governor. Pearson worked and spoke continuously in public, before committees, and eventually before the entire Assembly. Finally in 1903 the bill became law. It was the first law enacted in any South Atlantic or Gulf State providing for a state game-warden system. From the members of his senior zoology class he received a telegram: "We join the birds in singing your praises."

(Historian's note: This lecture provides some chilling insights into what was happening in the world of conservation in the early 1900's. If it were not for the work of T. Gilbert Pearson, we probably would not have many birds to watch today.)

HOLIDAY DINNER AND MEMBERS' SLIDE SHOW

Thursday, December 4, 2008

Natural Science Center, 4301 Lawndale Drive, Greensboro. Time: 6:00 p.m.

This will be a catered dinner, and is always enjoyed as a more social event than our regular program meetings. Members can bring slides (or digital) of some of their favorite nature-oriented pictures. (They don't have to be just birds!)

Price: \$20 per person. **Reservations required by November 20.** You can mail checks to the PBC address (on the return address label of this newsletter) or give them to the treasurer, Lary Treanor, at the November meeting or bring them to the dinner. But be sure to let Janet Goins know your plans by November 20th!!

Program: Members' Slide Show. You may bring up to 25 slides of nature-oriented subject.s. Dinner Contact: Janet Goins, 665-1883; gons5@aol.com.

Slide show: contact Lynn Moseley, 316-2258, lmoseley@guilford.edu



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

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

**Kelvin, Patrice & Stephen Bryant
Halley Buckanoff
Jim Eldrett
Joan Pauley**

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



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!

STARMOUNT FOREST/ BOG GARDEN

9/27/08 By George Wheaton

It was a gray and misty morning (with one brief shower) as nine members of the PBC began their bird walk at Starmount Forest. (Five continued on to the Bog Garden for a quick walk along the boardwalk.) The lighting was difficult but the wind was calm enabling us to spot movement in the foliage and to identify some good birds. Species diversity was low (only 33 species) but there were numerous warblers. Of special note was a Golden-winged Warbler, my personal first in Guilford County. Others were a couple of Chestnut-sideds, a small flock of Magnolias, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Hooded and an American Redstart. Other summer birds were Chimney Swifts, Eastern Wood-Pee-wee, Red-eyed Vireo and a Scarlet Tanager. A newly-arrived Ruby-crowned Kinglet was spotted, signifying the coming of winter.



- Park, cont. from p. 1

provided some interesting viewing for those of us who do not usually get to see these birds.

On our way back, we returned via the "Hidden Trail" hoping that we might stir up the owl, but he or she remains a mystery. As we drew close to the lower lake at Country Park, a Kingfisher let made its presence known. While gathered at the parking lot, Henry Link spotted a Palm Warbler and with this we all headed for home.

This excursion produced 45 species. The trip leader is satisfied that the trip was a successful experience despite the coolness of the day. A few sunny spots provided a reprieve where we could warm ourselves up.



-- Calendar, cont. from p. 6

Thursday – Sunday, November 27 - 30, 2008 Thanksgiving weekend

Field Trip: NC Coastal Plain/Outer Banks/ National Wildlife Refuges. This is a joint trip with TGPA. More details on p. 2. Trip Leaders: Julien McCarthy: 336-656-4774, jbm@triad.rr.com; Gregg Morris: 336-883-3270, gregg.morris@highpointnc.gov; Emily Tyler: 336-375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com

Thursday, December 4, 2008

Holiday Dinner and Members' Slide Show: More details on p. 4. Natural

Science Center, 4301 Lawndale Drive, Greensboro. Time: 6:00 pm. Price: \$20 per person. Reservations required, by Nov. 20. Program: Members' Slide Show. You may bring up to 25 slides of nature-oriented subjects. Dinner Contact: Janet Goins, 665-1883; gons5@aol.com. Slide show: contact Lynn Moseley, 316-2258, lmoseley@guilford.edu

Saturday, December 6, 2008

Field Trip: Alamance County. This trip will take place at two sites in Alamance County: Lake Mackintosh, Burlington's main reservoir for drinking water, and Cedarock Park, which combines trails through typical Piedmont forests and fields with an historical working farm representing rural life in the 19th century. In 2007, 52 species were observed in these two areas by 12:00 noon. This is a joint trip with TGPA. Leader: Lynn Moseley; 316-2258, lmoseley@guilford.edu

Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008

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, baddoqi@yahoo.com

Saturday, Jan. 10, 2009

Field Trip: White Street Landfill. The trip leader will make special arrangements for our birding group to enter this facility where the 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



Calendar

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 regularly at the landfill. We also will have an opportunity to consolidate further at the parking area of the landfill office. This is a joint trip with TGPA. Leader: Carolyn Allen: 288-3045, texallen@aol.com

Thursday, January 15, 2009

Meeting: The American Bird Conservancy: Unifying and Strengthening the Bird Conservation Movement. Dr. Ed Laurent, Bird Conservation Institute Science Coordinator. The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) aspires to lead bird conservation by analyzing issues using the best available science and collaborating with different groups to develop conservation strategies. Dr. Laurent will present an overview of ABC's American Birds Campaign, which is designed to safeguard the rarest birds. It will also help ABC lead the way in bird conservation science and conservation results across the hemisphere.

Bird of the Season: White Ibis

Saturday – Monday, January 17 – 19, 2009

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 a Red Crossbill or an American Tree Sparrow! Birding will be done at feeders and along roadsides. We will carpool (three cars) during birding forays along country roads. Maximum of eight participants plus leader(s). Preference given to those who did not go last year. Saturday departure time and place to be determined. Leader: George Wheaton; 336-540-8953(h), 336-392-3652(c), gcwheaton@earthlink.net

Saturday, January 31, 2009

Field Trip: Greensboro City Lakes. Meet at 9:00 a.m. Contact the leader for location. Ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, and gulls are our target birds on this tour of lake overlooks. Dress warmly and bring a thermos of something hot; the wind off the lakes can be chilling. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. No walking. This is a joint trip with TGPA. Leader: Henry Link; 273-4672, linkh@bellsouth.net

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, November 1, 2008

Field Trip: Miller Park. Meet at 9:00 a.m. 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 Barred Owls. Expect to see Brown-headed Nuthatches, Pine Warblers, kinglets, sparrows and other year-round residents. The trip will end around 11:30 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch or cash to visit a nearby eatery. Leaders: Ann & Chester Robertson. 816-8279, Ann@triad.rr.com

Saturday, November 15, 2008

Field Trip: Bog Garden. This local park in a residential section of Greensboro has become a hotspot for Neotropical migrants. Louise Brown: 685-5043, piedmontbirder@triad.rr.com

Thursday, November 20, 2008

Meeting: Chimney Swift: Nests, Roosts, and Migration. In autumn, many birders look forward to the annual gathering of Chimney Swifts in flocks numbering into the thousands as they prepare for their migration to South America. John Connors has been studying swifts in North Carolina, and will share his observations of these fascinating insectivores.

Bird of the Season: Great Blue Heron, by Patricia Bradley

Saturday, Nov. 22, 2008

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. Leader: Cal Weimer: 288-2160, cweimer@triad.rr.com

-see Calendar, cont. on p. 5



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

Holiday Dinner!

**Reservations
Required by Nov. 20**

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