

# HIGH COUNTRY HOOTS

High Country Audubon Society - Serving Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga, and Wilkes Counties

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## COVE CREEK FIELD TRIP AUGUST 6

High Country Audubon Society has been invited to participate in the Cove Creek Collaboration by Janet Montgomery.

The mission of the project is "to promote eco-literacy at Cove Creek Elementary School through interaction with nature and art, in collaboration with Appalachian State University faculty and students, local organizations and the local community."

The project's plan is to build an integrated curriculum using biology, sustainable development, art, geography and many other aspects of education.

As students become eco-literate they learn how to identify ecological systems and recognize their role within the different, but interconnected systems. Renewal and expansion of interpretive nature trails

on the property behind Cove Creek Elementary is just one of the aspects of the project now in the planning stages. There also will be experiential learning in sciences and the arts and the compiling of biological and geographical data.

HCAS has an opportunity to participate in this ambitious project and all members are invited to come to the August 6 field trip to Cove Creek. On that day the group will bird and meet Janet Montgomery to discuss exactly what HCAS's role should be in the project.

If you wish to carpool, a group will meet at the New Market Cash Points at 8 a.m. Parking is limited at the site. The group will gather at the Cove Creek Elementary parking lot at 8:30 a.m. HCAS is very fortunate to be invited to participate in this innovative and exciting project!

## AUGUST PROGRAM WILL FOCUS ON NICARAGUA TRIP

The monthly meeting on August 16 will feature a presentation on the March Nicaragua trip that many HCAS members went on. Martha Cutler, Doug Blackford, Robin Diaz, Betsy Murrelle, Doris and Jim Ratchford, Curtis Smalling, Pat Wisch and Bill Yancey participated in the trip organized by Dave Davenport of EcoQuest Travel.

During the initial 11-day segment of the trip the group visited the highlands of the northern Jinotega region to stay in the shade-grown coffee farm El Jaguar. This farm was profiled in the May-June issue of Audubon Magazine and is known for "a spectacular variety of birds." Other locations of interest included volcanoes Masaya and

Mombacho, Chocoyero National Park, Finca Esperanza Verde and Los Guatuzos Wildlife Refuge on the Papaturro River. There were also many opportunities to sit on a veranda with coffee or beer and get in some relaxed birding time.

The 2011 group had 290 species of birds listed from the 11-day trip and the 6-day extension to the southeastern lowlands. In addition to birds, the group saw monkeys, sloths, amphibians and a six foot boa constrictor.

A similar trip is planned for 2012. We hope you join us on August 16 at 6:30 p.m. when the group shares photos, information and anecdotes from the trip!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### August

6	Cove Creek Field Trip	8:30 a.m.
16	Monthly Meeting at Watauga County Ag. Conference Center	6:30 p.m.
20	Dragonfly Walk	10 a.m.

### September

1	Swift Night Out at Lees-McRae	6 p.m.
20	Monthly Meeting at Grandfather Mountain	6:30 p.m.
22	Hawk Watching at Mahogany Rock	TBD
24	Bullhead Mountain Hike with Blue Ridge Conservancy	TBD

All events and meeting times are subject to change.

For updated information please visit

<http://highcountryaudubon.org>.

## FUN FACTS

### Yellow-breasted

### Chat



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- Despite its bright yellow chest, loud song, and conspicuous display flights, the Yellow-breasted Chat is easily overlooked because of its skulking nature and the denseness of its brushy haunts.
- Long considered the largest of the wood-warblers, genetic data suggest that it is not a warbler at all.
- In one study in central Kentucky, DNA fingerprinting revealed that 17% of 29 Yellow-breasted Chat nestlings were not sired by the male of the social pair and 33% of nine broods contained at least one extra-pair nestling.
- Food: small invertebrates and fruits. Gleans prey from foliage of low, dense shrubs, or from ground. Holds food with foot.

Info and picture found on <http://www.birds.cornell.edu>.



Thanks to Kelly Cherry-Leigh, Bob Cherry's daughter, for creating HCAS's Facebook page!

Check out the page and stay up-to-date with events and happenings by logging onto [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and searching for "High Country Audubon Society."