

HIGH COUNTRY HOOTS



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

WingN'it of Banner Elk



Edi and Rick Crosby are not new to the business world. After having a commercial embroidery business for 18 years in Miami and Edi's experience as a bookkeeper, they knew exactly what they were looking for when they began searching for a place to open a business in Banner Elk that focused on birds and bird supplies. They found Snow Toys, purchased the building, and began their first efforts in retail.

WingN'it opened for business last May and is filled with all types of bird houses, feeders and baths, along with good strong hardware to hang them, if necessary. Edi describes herself and her husband as "backyard bird people" and she is very knowledgeable about problems that might be encountered like squirrels and birdseed storage. Bird seed is for sale year-round, even though Snow Toys will be back for the winter months. And if you find you need some other bird supplies, all you have to do is call the

store at 828-898-4199 and Edi will get it for you, if possible, all through the winter months, just as she will during the summer season.

There are *Birds of the Carolinas* field guides for sale and gift items with bird themes such as birding journals, thermometers, wind chimes, cards with seeds embedded in them, art by local artisans, bird figures, and a whole lot more.

There's also a Kids section with "fandexes" which are helpful when identifying different species of birds.

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All You Ever Wanted to Know about Moths

On August 21st you will have the chance to get all your questions about moths answered by Lori Owenby, a park ranger at Riverbend and St. Stephens Parks, who will be presenting a program on moths. You are sure to learn more than you already know, because if you are like me, I know almost nothing at all about them although I have begun to

notice them more and more, since some of them have striking colors and designs.

Lori says, "Just know that you may never want to sleep at night again!" Riverbend Park located in Conover, NC, is a Catawba County park consisting of 450

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July/August 2012

Volume 4 Issue 4

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July		
10 Tues.	Daniel Boone Native Gardens Bird Walk Trip Leader: Dr. Stewart Skeate	8:30 am
11 Wed.	Mountain Bogs Preservation Project meeting- Watauga County Library	4:30 pm- 6:30 pm
17 Tues.	HCAS 2012 Annual Meeting Elk Valley Preserve in Banner Elk	5:00 pm

August		
14 Tues.	Daniel Boone Native Gardens Bird Walk Trip Leader: Martha Cutler	8:30 am
18 Sat.	Blue Ridge Conservancy Hike Pond Mountain and Rip Shin Farm RSVP 828-264-2511 or info@blueridgeconservancy.org	
21 Tues.	HCAS Monthly Meeting Holiday Inn Express of Boone. Program: "Moths" presented by Park Ranger Lori Owenby	6:30 pm

Bobolink



(photo courtesy of the National Digital Library)

- Bobolinks are communal feeders with several adult birds sharing in the feeding of the young birds.
- Unlike most birds, a Bobolink is paler in color above, and has darker undersides.
- Prairie-like habitat is prime area for development and prime habitat for the Bobolink. This is resulting in a decline of the species.
- The Bobolink is an extraordinary migrant, traveling to south of the equator each autumn and making a round-trip of approximately 20,000 kilometers (12,500 mi).
- One female, known to be at least 9 years old, presumably made this trip annually, a total distance equal to traveling 4.5 times around the earth at the equator! – Cornell Lab of Ornithology's [All About Birds](#)

HCAS 2012 Annual Meeting Coming up in July

Our 2012 Annual Meeting will begin at 5 pm on Tuesday, July 17th, and we plan to continue our tradition of enjoying a potluck dinner together. Remember to bring your own plate, cups and utensils so we won't create a lot of waste.

A silent auction will be held as an informal fundraiser, so if anyone has bird-related items that they want to donate to our cause, please bring them along to the meeting. We will organize the items for display and give everyone until the end of the meeting to place their bids. At that time, we'll collect funds from those with the winning bids and disperse all objects.

This year our annual meeting will feature the awarding of the Sue Wells Research Grant to Jessica Krippel, a Master of Science student at Western Carolina University. Jessica plans to use the grant for her song sparrow research. We hope that Jessica will be able to attend the meeting to receive her \$500 award and tell us a little about her work.



Elk Valley Preserve, photo by Monty Combs

The election for President and Secretary of HCAS will take place after dinner during the business part of our meeting. The nominations, so far, are Bob Cherry for President and Brenda Combs for Secretary. We will also fill the empty Board of Directors seats.

We set our annual membership fees to come due each year at the beginning of July in hopes that the annual meeting in July would make it easier for everyone to remember and pay on time. There are again two options for payment this year: \$10 for 1 year with a suggested donation of \$5 for each field trip you attend; or, \$25 for 1 year with all field trips during the year included. If you recently paid your membership fees, they will not come due until July 2013, when we hope again that most members will pay their dues at the 2013 annual meeting.

Dr. Stewart Skeate, wildlife biologist at Lees-McRae College, has again allowed us the use of the Elk Valley Preserve and Field Station for our annual meeting, as he has for many years. To find it, go to the stoplight in Banner Elk and turn left onto Highway 194 towards Lees-McRae College. Stay on Highway 194 until you see Puckett Road

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High Country Audubon Society Board

Anita Clemmer - President

Bob Cherry - Vice President, Conservation Chair

Brenda Combs - Secretary

Richard Paulette - Treasurer

Martha Cutler - Field Trips & Social Events Chair

Doris Ratchford - Education Chair

Janet Paulette - Membership Chair

Jesse Pope, Past President

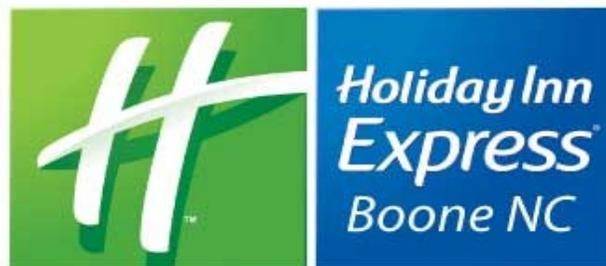
Janet Palmer

Mary Carol Ochipa

Bettie Bond

Rosalind Pevsner

Corporate Sponsor: Holiday Inn Express



High Country Hoots is published six times a year by the High Country Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Group email members receive the newsletter via electronic mail. There is also access to the newsletter on our website, and it is archived at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highcountryaudubon>

Visit our website at <http://highcountryaudubon.org> to join our group email.



**High Country
Audubon Society**

PO Box 3746
Boone, NC 28607

<http://highcountryaudubon.org>

E-mail: highcountrybirder@yahoo.com

A \$5 donation is requested for field trip participation.

All events and meeting times are subject to change.

For updated information please visit

<http://highcountryaudubon.org>.

The Bluebird Effect, Uncommon Bonds with Common Birds, a book review by Anita Clemmer

Cont. from Page 1 — **WingN'it of Banner Elk**



Every so often I come across an exceptional book that I feel compelled to share with others. This is one of those books, written by Julie Zickefoose, who is herself an exceptional human being. She is a writer, artist, licensed bird rehabilitator and decent human being. She has been a contributor to Bird Watchers Digest for many years.

The book came out in hardcover just this year and although I don't usually indulge quickly in books of this kind, I did this time, and I have enjoyed absolutely every second of what I have read so far! Each chapter is about Julie's experiences with a different species. The book is divided into sections by seasons. The first section is called "Spring Songbirds: Peeking into the Nest" and includes chapters about bluebirds, tree swallows, starlings, chickadees, barn swallows, and Carolina wrens. The "Summer Work: Drawing, Raising, and Saving Birds" section includes hummingbirds, osprey, titmice, chimney swifts ... so it goes into fall then winter. The book is full of her sketches and finished watercolors of the birds and nests along with her notes and the details of rehabilitation that only those who do it can know.

I am reading this book very slowly, one chapter at a time, in order to savor it and even when I finish it, I will probably begin all over again. The front cover says the book is "about the change that's set in motion by one single act, such as saving an injured bluebird-or a hummingbird, swift, or phoebe." Every kind act sets a chain of effects into motion, whether they are seen or unseen, whether they involve birds or humans.

The *Bluebird Effect* is a beautiful book to look through and a beautiful book to read, again and again!

Cont. from Page 2— **HCAS 2012 Annual Meeting Coming up in July**

on the left. Turn left onto Puckett Road and after you cross a small bridge, turn left again onto the access road to the Field Station.



Elk Valley Preserve Bird Walk, photo by Monty Combs



There are items in the store for people who love gardens and butterflies, too.

The Cream Shack is on the side of WingN'it so you can enjoy a delicious hand-dipped treat, as well! The store's address is 1757 Tynecastle Highway, Banner Elk. Store hours are 10 am to 6 pm on Tuesday through Saturday, 11 am to 5 pm on Sunday, and closed on Mondays. Keep an eye out for their upcoming website

www.wingnitnc.com

WingN'it Wild Bird Center is our newest Corporate Sponsor, and they have extended a generous 10% discount on gifts to all High Country Audubon Society members! We thank them for joining us and hope their business will be a high-flying success!

Cont. from Page 1 — **All You Ever Wanted to Know about Moths**

acres with extensive hiking trails, and St. Stephens Park is just 9.1 acres located in Hickory. A third Catawba County park is the 189-acre Baker's Mountain Park in Hickory. To learn more about the parks and their activities go online to

<http://enewsletter.catawbacountync.gov/parks/>

To enjoy an interesting program about moths, come to our August meeting at the Holiday Inn Express in Boone on Tuesday evening, August 21st at 6:30 pm.



Luna Moth, photo by Beverly Saltonstall

There is nothing in which the birds differ more from man than the way in which they can build and yet leave a landscape as it was before. ~Robert Lynd, *The Blue Lion and Other Essays*

Daniel Boone Native Gardens Bird Walks

Going Well

A total of 15 people attended the June 12th DBNG bird walk led by Richard Grey. It was a very wet morning but the sun appeared and we proceeded to stroll through the gardens first. The house wrens watched us closely as we passed through their habitat along the central path. We spotted several gray catbirds along the side and back of the garden.

As we took the trek up Strawberry Hill, we heard more diversity than we were able to see. But our list grew as we saw and heard 21 different species on the walk. Many questions were asked and answered and one gentleman who is a spider specialist identified a spider as a fishing spider. The spider was brought along by a home school student, aged 7 years, who wanted to know the spider's identity. She was also very interested in birds and already is what I would call a birder, especially when I learned from her mother that she sketches the birds she sees in her nature journal.

This walk is a prime example of how Audubon members can make a difference spreading correct information about birds to young people and adults who are interested. Isn't that what Audubon is all about? Thank you, Richard, for leading this walk and to all the bird walk leaders who volunteered for this project!

Notes of Interest:

- Bob Cherry has been nominated for the office of HCAS President and Brenda Combs for the office of Secretary. Remember anyone can make a nomination before the time of the actual vote at the annual meeting on July 17. If you would like to do so, your nomination committee members are Doris Ratchford (dp_ratchford@me.com), Mary Carol Ochipa (mcochipa@att.net) and Brenda Combs (bcombs@wilkes.net).
- If you want to see a bobolink, visit Mount Vernon Baptist Church's cemetery, which is located on Bamboo Road on the crest of the hill across the road from the church. Scan the pasture and along the fence line on the right side and even all the way to the back of the pasture. A spotting scope may be helpful, but the last time I was there, a bobolink came right to the power line not 20 feet away from me and sang!



Daniel Boone Native Garden Bird Walk, photo by Mary Carol Ochipa

HCAS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual membership dues: \$10 for an individual
Field trips: \$5 suggested donation for an individual per trip
OR

\$25 for an individual covers annual dues and all field trips for the year

Annual corporate sponsorship: \$50

Dues of renewing members are payable by July 31st of each year.

Also, please consider making a contribution to HCAS to support our local efforts related to protection of birds, their habitats, and our environment.

Mail your check along with your name, address, telephone number, and email address to:

High Country Audubon Society

Attention: Membership

PO Box 3746

Boone, NC 28607

The High Country Audubon Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization

Donations to the High Country Audubon Society are tax-deductible as allowed by applicable law.