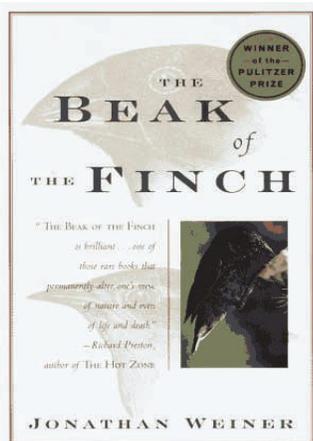


# HIGH COUNTRY HOOTS

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

## MARCH MEETING-DINNER AND DARWIN



Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jonathan Weiner will speak on his book The Beak of the Finch: A Story of Evolution in Our Time at 8:00 p.m. Weiner's book profiled the research of Peter and Rosemary Grant as they carried out extensive studies of evolution on Darwin's finches in the Galapagos Islands.

Weiner, now a science writing teacher at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, has also written His Brother's Keeper and Time, Love, Memory: A Great Biologist and his Quest for the Origins of Behavior.

Plans for the March meeting of the High Country Audubon Society have been made for Thursday, March 26 and include dinner plans followed by a lecture at Appalachian State University.

Anyone interested is welcome to meet at Café Portofino in Boone at 6:30 p.m. for dinner. The evening's activities will then move over to the Blue Ridge Ballroom at the Student Union on ASU's campus.

This lecture is part of ASU's Darwin Bicentennial Celebration commemorating the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth. During the 2008-09 academic year the school has been hosting a series of lectures and events focusing on Darwin's ideas, their impacts on society, and his theory of evolution. All talks are free and open to the public.

Please make plans to join us March 26 for the dinner and lecture!

## GET TO KNOW THE WILSON CREEK IMPORTANT BIRD AREA

An IBA, or Important Bird Area, is a site that provides essential habitat for one or more species of bird. Did you know one is located right in the High Country's backyard?

The Wilson Creek IBA covers the Wilson Creek drainage at lower elevations between

HWY 181 and Edgemont Road. It was adopted in 2008 by the High Country Audubon Society.

IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds. According to the National Audubon Society, a site must satisfy at least one of

the following criteria to qualify as an IBA. The site must support:

- Species of conservation concern (threatened and endangered species)

Continued on Page 2

March/April - 2009

Volume I, Issue I

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Page 2 for More Details

| March |                             |           |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 21    | Wilson Creek IBA Field Trip | All Day   |
| 25    | Wilson Creek IBA Field Trip | All Day   |
| 26    | Monthly Meeting             |           |
|       | Dinner at Café Portofino    | 6:30 p.m. |
|       | Darwin Series at ASU        | 8:00 p.m. |

| April |                                    |           |
|-------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 21    | Monthly Meeting                    | 6:30 p.m. |
| 25    | Warblers on the Parkway Field Trip | All Day   |

| May |                                     |           |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 16  | Birding Grandfather's Profile Trail | 7:00 a.m. |
| 19  | Monthly Meeting                     | 6:30 p.m. |

A \$5 donation is requested with field trip attendance.

All events and meeting times are subject to change.

For updated information please visit

<http://www.geocities.com/hcaudubon>.

## FUN FACTS

### The American Woodcock



- Unlike many birds that leave their nests at hatching, newly hatched woodcocks cannot feed themselves. They are dependent on the mother for food for the first week. The chicks start to probe in dirt at three or four days after hatching.
- The flexible tip of the American Woodcock's bill is specialized for catching earthworms. The bird probably feels worms as it probes in the ground. A woodcock may rock its body back and forth without moving its head as it slowly walks around, stepping heavily with its front foot. This action may make worms move around in the soil, increasing their detectability.

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

## High Country Audubon Society

PO Box 3746  
Boone, NC 28607  
<http://www.geocities.com/hcaudubon>  
E-mail: [highcountrybirder@yahoo.com](mailto:highcountrybirder@yahoo.com)



A Wilson Creek IBA field trip in 2008.  
Photo by Jesse Pope

## Wilson Creek IBA cont.

- Restricted-ranges species (species vulnerable because they are not widely distributed)
- Species that are vulnerable because their populations are concentrated in one general habitat type
- Species, or groups similar species (such as waterfowl or shorebirds), that are vulnerable because they occur at high densities due to their congregatory behavior

At the moment there are 41 states with identified sites, 213 IBA adoption groups, and over 300 million acres of identified IBAs.

Two field trips to the Wilson Creek IBA

are planned Saturday, March 21 and Wednesday, March 25. During the visit the group will take a driving tour of the IBA via forest service roads in the Wilson Creek drainage. Stops will be made at some of the point count locations to do some bird watching, even though most of the summer migrants are still a month away from returning.

More information will come via e-mail the week of the trip. Those interested will carpool from Lowes Foods in Tynecastle to the IBA. A \$5 donation is requested for field trip participation. Please consider coming out and experiencing the Wilson Creek IBA firsthand!

### April Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, April 21 - 6:30 p.m.  
La Quinta Inn, Boone

The focus this month will be on the common butterflies and dragonflies that the group might encounter when out birding.

Bob Cherry will have a PowerPoint presentation and resources available to help novices.

### Warblers on the Parkway Field Trip

Saturday, April 25 - All Day

The group will be birding from Moses Cone south along the Blue Ridge Parkway towards Grandfather Mountain. The search will be on for some of the early warblers that have made it back to the High Country in April! The various habitats create a wonderful diversity of birds that we hope to take a closer look at!

**Is there a program topic you would like to hear about?  
Let us know!**

### High Country Audubon Society Board

**Jesse Pope** - President, Field Trips & Social Events Chair

**Anita Clemmer** - Vice President

**Janet Palmer** - Secretary/Treasurer

**Bob Cherry** - Conservation & Education Chair

**Bettie Bond**

**John Bond**

**Martha Cutler**

**Mary Carol Ochipa**

**Stewart Skeate**

**Miles Tager**

**Sue Wells**

High Country Hoots is published six times a year by the High Country Audubon Society, a chapter of National Audubon. Local members receive the newsletter via electronic mail. It is also archived on <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highcountryaudubon>.

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

An annual membership to the High Country Audubon Society is \$10 per person and due June 1 of each year. Membership includes access to all meetings, the group's listserv, and High Country Hoots, the HCAS e-newsletter. Mail check and information (name, address, telephone number, e-mail) to:

High Country Audubon Society  
Attention: Janet Palmer  
PO Box 3746  
Boone, NC 28607