

HIGH COUNTRY HOOTS



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

Birds Moving Farther North

by Bob Cherry

One of the strongest proofs that the world is warming has been numerous studies of plants and animals responding to a warmer planet. And now a new study in *Conservation Biology* has given additional evidence that this is occurring.

A study led by Alan Hitch, a wildlife ecologist at Auburn University, looked at the breeding ranges of North American birds over a 26-year period. His data show that as global temperatures have increased the range of many birds in North America has shifted to the north. This is similar to what was found in a study in Great Britain where birds have also been expanding to the north.

This also supports a 2008 study by researchers at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. They found a shift in the breeding ranges of many birds that breed in New York.

Looking at data collected in the 1980's and later in the early 2000's, they found that the birds moved their range boundaries up to 40 miles to the north.

And many of the birds that are more common in Canada and the northern U.S. also moved their southern boundaries to the north as well. This movement was even faster than the movement of their northern boundaries.

A report by Audubon, *Birdlife in the USA*, notes similar findings using data provide by citizen-scientists. Data from the annual Christmas Bird Counts show that 58% of the 305 widespread wintering species shifted significantly north since 1968. Some of these birds moved hundreds of miles with movement found in every type of bird, though forest and feeder birds shifted more than grassland birds, probably due to limits in available grassland habitat.

Burke's Garden Birding

By Jesse Pope

We had a great time February 23rd at Burkes Garden, VA, with great weather. We had a little rain on the way up, but it had mostly quit by the time we reached Tazewell County. As the day went on the skies opened up, and the weather was really pretty nice by around lunch. We didn't see as many birds as we usually do, but we still saw 31 species and we had a great time none the less. I wish we could have had more time to bird there, but it is a long trip especially for such a large group to travel together.

We ran into folks from two Virginia bird clubs on a combined trip: Bristol Bird Club and Buchanan County Bird Club. They had some luck earlier in the day with golden eagles, which we didn't see on our trip, but otherwise we mostly saw the same birds. They also had looks at some green-winged teal at the usual spot, but they were tucked up where they were not visible to us.

The two major highlights of the trip were three good looks at red-headed woodpeckers and a bald eagle in a nest! The bald eagle was seen not long after we



entered Burke's Garden in a tree overlooking a barn and cattle pasture. It's certainly not where you would expect an eagle nest for sure, but it was really neat to see the white head of an eagle in the nest.

The red-headed woodpeckers were scattered along in wooded corridors. The first bird we watched was initially perched on a fence post on the side of the road before flying up to a stand of oak trees. We stopped and watched the bird for nearly 10 minutes, and it really put on a show. We also got to hear a couple of Eastern Meadowlarks singing and lots of Killdeer around the valley.

Continued on page 2

April/May/June 2013

Volume 5 Issue 2

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Due to the large number of events scheduled for April, May and June, the calendar has been moved to page 7.

Birding in Columbia

By Martha Cutler

For our June 18th program we are lucky to have Simon Thompson, co-owner of the Asheville Wild Birds Unlimited store and director of Ventures Birding Tours.

<http://www.birdventures.com/index.html>

Originally from Suffolk, England, Simon has lived in North Carolina for over 10 years. He has also lived in Lebanon, Kenya, Yemen, and Ghana, where his interest in birds and natural history began. In addition to traveling extensively in the United States, Simon spent six months in China studying the crane and bird of prey migration as a member of the British "China Crane Watch" expedition. As director and originator of Ventures Nature Travel program, Simon has led many birding trips all over the world. Simon will talk about birding in Colombia, a country with more species of birds than any other country and which provides crucial habitat for many of "our" migratory species. This will be fun and informative.



Simon Thompson and his mother, Lenare Thompson,

on a 2012 trip to Colombia.



(continued from page 1) We had 12 people on the trip, so no shortage of eyes and ears this year. It was a great experience for me, getting a chance to meet several folks new to HCAS for the first time, and getting to visit with familiar faces of the chapter as well. Several of them are new group email members too, so I'm sure we will all get to know them better over the coming months and years. I hope you will consider joining the chapter for one of our field trip experiences this year! They are always great, and we have a lot of fun too.

Photos by Monty Combs

Photographing the Birds of Florida

by James Seiferheld



Tropical Kingbird

Snowy Plover, Semipalmated Plover, and Wilson's Plover.

I traveled to many places in south Florida including the Everglades where there was a Brown-crested Flycatcher, seen but not photographed, and a Tropical Kingbird, a rarity for Florida. Nearby, there were Sedge Wrens and

Photographing birds is my passion. I began in earnest in 2008 and have been lucky enough to photograph 322 species. My recent birding has taken me to Florida. I traveled the west coast to Fort Desoto Park near Tampa where I photographed a Great Horned Owl and owllet. Then I slowly made my way to Tigertail Beach on Marco Island. There I was fortunate to photograph numerous shore-birds including



La Sagra's Flycatcher

a Great Crested Flycatcher. I also visited a small park, Brian Piccolo Park, to see Burrowing Owls as well as Monk Parakeets. The Burrowing Owls are easy to see as they are perched on the ground near abandoned burrows. I counted 47 Monk Parakeets at this park.

I visited Key Biscayne for a couple of days. There I found Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Herring Gulls, some Piping Plovers and a Purple Gallinule. The last place I visited was Green Cay Wetlands in Boynton Beach. Green Cay is a wonderful place with over one mile of boardwalks through marsh. There I saw the La Sagra's Flycatcher, American Bittern, and Painted Bunting.



Unfortunately, it was time to come back to North Carolina but I was happy to have photographed 54 species of birds with 11 new species. Now I am off on another birding adventure to Texas. Happy birding everyone!!

Burrowing Owl

Photos by James Seiferheld. More of his photos can be seen on the Yahoo e-mail site.

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**\$10/year/person (plus \$5 suggested donation per field trip attended)
OR**

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Attention: Membership
PO Box 3746
Boone, NC 28607**

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

Birding in Arizona and Southern California

Article and photos by Richard Gray

Over the Christmas break, I traveled to Arizona and Southern California for astronomical purposes – to observe on the Vatican Advanced Technology Telescope on Mt. Graham (elevation 10,500 ft) for four nights, and then to travel with my Vatican Observatory colleague, Chris Corbally to Long Beach for a meeting of the American Astronomical Society. Of course, I took every opportunity to observe birds, and that proved to be easy as Chris is also a keen birder.

Chris picked me up at the Tucson airport and we stayed one night at the Jesuit house in that city before leaving for Mt. Graham. Their hummingbird feeder netted the first “lifer” of the trip – a Broad-billed Hummingbird, resplendent in blue-green feathers and a fire-hydrant red bill (see photo). A trek around the neighborhood was also productive – Gambel’s Quail, Gila Woodpecker, Verdin, Anna’s Hummingbird, and Curve-billed Thrasher being just a few of the birds I saw that afternoon.

I was excited about birding on Mt. Graham, because a search on eBird and in the literature showed almost nothing about the birds in winter near the summit. One reason for this is that only astronomers and the biologists monitoring the endemic – and endangered – Mt. Graham Red Squirrel are allowed on the summit during winter.

Observing during the night made it difficult to bird during the day, but I got out into the thin frigid air as early as possible. The first morning I saw nothing and was thus discouraged until I spotted the reason for the avian quiet – a Northern Goshawk floating silently above the ridge line. Other mornings were more productive, with Oregon and Pink-sided Juncos, Mountain Chickadees, Pigmy Nuthatches, Red Crossbills, Hairy Woodpeckers, Pine Siskins, and Brown Creepers all present, despite the severe conditions.

After four nights on the mountain, we traveled back to Tucson, spent one night there, and then headed for Long Beach. During the conference, I woke up early on two mornings and birded around the waterfront. There were some good birds there, including Western and Eared Grebe and Heermann’s Gull.

But the best birding was after the conference. Chris and I planned 1 ½ days of birding on our way back. We first proceeded down the coast to Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, almost certainly the top birding spot on the Southern California coast. There was an abundance of birds in the wetlands and ponds of Bolsa Chica. We saw Surf Scoter, Brant, Eared Grebe, Reddish Egret, Snowy Plover, Long-billed Curlew and many other species. The number of birds in that one tiny spot was wonderful to see, but imagine how marvelous that coast must have been before European settlement with every pond and wetland along that strand alive with birds!



We stayed overnight near San Diego, and then plotted a course to the Salton Sea. We first passed over the southern California mountains, stopping in a number of places including Mission Trails Regional Park (Costa’s Hummingbird, Western Scrub-jay, Wrentit,

California Towhee, Say’s Phoebe), but my favorite place was Anza-Borrego State Park.

Despite being in the mountains, the park is a barren desert region; trees grow only where ground water seeps to the surface. One such place is Yaqui Well. To reach this “seep”, we parked our car beside the road and trekked over a desert path for about a mile. At Yaqui Well there is a grove of Ironwood trees with clumps of mistletoe. These are the haunts of Phainopepla, also known as Silky Flycatchers. From a distance these beautiful birds look almost completely black, but close-up the males are iridescent blue with red eyes. When they fly, large white patches on their wings can be seen. At Yaqui Well we also saw Western Bluebirds, Ravens, and Black-throated Sparrows.



Back in the car, we headed for Unit 1 of the National Wildlife Refuge on the shores of the Salton Sea. The Salton Sea is an artificial body of water formed early last century when a retaining dam broke and waters of the Colorado river emptied into that natural basin, over 200 feet below sea level. The Salton Sea is now saltier than the Pacific Ocean but is a paradise for birds. All birders should visit there at least once in their lives!

Unit 1 proved elusive, because Chris’s GPS Jane got confused, but we found our way to the Unit 2 visitor center. That is a great place. It has an observation tower overlooking agricultural fields. That evening, there was a huge flock (many thousands) of snow geese in the adjacent field. We spent our time on the platform viewing them and other birds. At one point, a bobcat crept out into the field, unaware of our presence, and headed toward the flock, undoubtedly intending to enjoy goose for dinner.

We stayed that night at Calipatria Inn, in the town of Calipatria, and headed out early in the morning to Unit 2 again. There is a trail (Rock Hill trail) that heads from the visitor center to the shore of the Salton Sea. It first enters a grove of acacia trees. There we saw Abert’s Towhee, Black Phoebe, Verdin, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cattle Egret, Western Kingbird (unusually early), Loggerhead Shrike, and Red-winged Blackbird.



Soon the trail emerged at the shore of the Salton Sea. The shore was crowded with birds, including Black-necked Stilt, Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, American Avocet, Long-billed Dowitcher, Snowy Egret, and various gulls. Flying overhead were American White Pelicans, and paddling in the sea and adjacent ponds were Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, Eared Grebe, American Coot, and, best of all, Yellow-footed Gull. The latter is found in the United States only on the shores of the Salton Sea, so we were excited to see it.

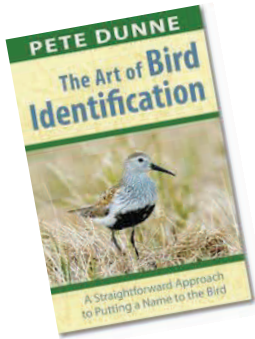
Back at the visitor’s center, there were a number of birds including Chipping Sparrows and Common Ground-Dove at the feeders. Secreted under the fronds of a palm tree we saw a sleeping Barn Owl.

Taking the advice of the visitor center staff, we headed south out of Unit 2 to look for Burrowing Owls. It wasn’t long before Chris spotted a pair of owls in a burrow beside the road. Soon we were seeing them everywhere! These are small, long-legged owls that occupy burrows dug by other animals. Some of them were living in drain pipes along the road. We also saw a Roadrunner doing its thing - racing at an incredible pace along the side of the road.

Unfortunately, all good things come to an end; I had an airplane to catch the next day, so we headed back to Tucson. In those few short days, we saw 86 species in Southern California and an additional 16 in Tucson and Mt. Graham, including quite a number of “lififers” for me. I am already planning a return visit!

LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS

By Martha Cutler

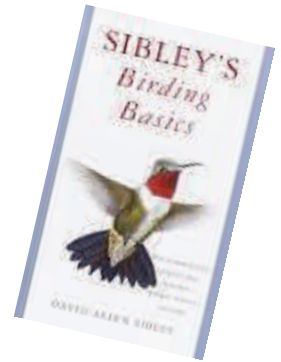


Dunne Pete. *The Art of Bird Identification*. Stackpole Books, 2012.

“A Straightforward Approach to Putting a Name to the Bird”

Sibley, David Allen. *Sibley's Birding Basics*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

“How to identify birds, using the clues in feathers, habitats, behaviors, and sounds”



Both these books aim to provide a foundation for the beginning birder and suggest ways to improve birding skills. Though the authors are in agreement that the modern approach to birding is holistic, the books are different in content and style and may prove helpful in different ways.

Dunne's attitude is positive and encouraging. His style is relaxed and humorous and he often uses anecdotes to make his point. For him the important thing is developing a skill set to identify the whole bird in context, using field time to learn not just field marks but also habitat, movement, mannerisms and vocalizations. While in the field, focus on the bird and “keep the guide closed, the apps off.”

Dunne suggests birders start by noting habitat (“birds are almost always where they are supposed to be”) and then study family groups and their general characteristics by focusing on common members of the family (robins for the thrush family, for example). This knowledge can serve as a base for identification of other birds. With regard to the topic of vocalizations, his approach is similar. He groups songs together into 5 types and recommends building on the familiar (again the robin is a good example).

Birding with more experienced birders is a good way to learn, but you must practice on your own. Ultimately, Dunne concludes, “birds are not identified by the eyes. They are not identified with the ears. They are identified with the mind.” He encourages the reader to learn to do just that.

Sibley's Birding Basics is similar in philosophy but Sibley's style is more formal and his content more extensive and detail-oriented. He uses his own excellent illustrations to make or clarify many of his points. According to Sibley, the beginning birder must learn to see details, starting with a bird's bill and face, and then to interpret them. Sibley also provides general information about basics such as optics, field guides and field skills. He touches on record-keeping and sketching, with examples that might discourage non-artists!

Chapters on “The Challenges of Bird Identification” and “Misidentification” discuss such things as proportion, comparison with other species, the effects of posture and weather on perceived shape, and the effect of light on color perception, with many explanatory illustrations. Several chapters on feathers discuss types, arrangement, wear and molt cycles. These are accompanied by diagrams naming body parts and feather groups.

Sibley's book contains more specific information than Dunne's and might, at least to the complete novice, seem overwhelming at times. Birders at all levels who are looking to improve their skills will find it useful as a reminder both of details to think about, as well as pitfalls of observation, and also as a reference source.

Both books are available new and used from www.alibris.com and www.amazon.com.

Sending Jessie Off to Camp

We are excited that HCAS Board member and brand new Education Committee Chair, Jessie Dale, will be heading off to camp this summer to learn how to make our environmental education program even better. Jessie has signed up for Audubon's Hog Island Camp program “Sharing Nature: An Educator's Week” this July. This class is designed to help participants learn methods and activities that will help engage both children and adults with birds and nature.

HCAS and Hog Island Camp are supporting Jessie with scholarship funds, but she will also be covering much of the cost with her own funds and will be missing a week of work while attending class. You can help send Jessie to camp by mailing a donation to HCAS, PO Box 3746, Boone, NC 28607 or by contacting one of HCAS's board members.

HCAS Continues Its Battle Against Garlic Mustard

In 2010 HCAS began an effort with Blue Ridge Conservancy to remove the non-native garlic mustard from Valle Crucis Community Park. This European plant spreads rapidly, replacing native plants and disrupting habitat needed by the local bird communities. We were so successful with our efforts in 2010 and 2011 that little work was needed last spring to pull the few new sprouts that came up. Perhaps this year will show that HCAS and BRC volunteers have been victorious in this fight.

In 2012 we continued our work at the Meat Camp Environmental Studies Area, a local NC Birding Trail spot north of Boone. HCAS volunteers spent about 40 hours pulling plants at this site over four different workdays and hauled away several garbage bags stuffed with the smelly plant.

We plan to renew our efforts in mid-April when the plant is flowering and easy to see but before it goes to seed. Plants at Valle Crucis will be removed after the weekly Wednesday morning bird walks. A weekend in April will be selected for Meat Camp once we see when the plants go to flower. Exact dates will be provided on the HCAS group email and on our website.

The Burrowing Owls of Cape Coral

Article and photos by Beverly Saltonstall

The Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is only found in North and South America and there are about twenty sub-species found throughout its range. The western and Florida sub-species are the only Burrowing Owls found in North America. Cape Coral, Florida (Lee County) has the largest population of the Florida sub-species of the Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana*) in the world. This little pint-sized bird is found throughout Florida, lower Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and the Bahamas. The range of the western sub-species (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) is southern Canada into Mexico with the rest of the 18 or so sub-species scattered throughout South America and the Caribbean.



2 - week old Burrowing Owls

In Florida, the Burrowing Owl is listed as a species of special concern. Florida Fish and Wildlife (FWC) has published a report that 62 wildlife species will either be up-listed or down-listed. The Burrowing Owl is slated to be up-listed

to threatened status.

There is no accurate record of just how many Burrowing Owls there are in Cape Coral, but FWC uses the figure of 1000 nesting pairs. A recent survey counted 2500 burrows in the City which encompasses over 100 sq. miles of land. Certainly not all of these are active burrows, but Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife, the volunteer group that monitors the wildlife in the City, gets calls nearly every day during nesting season with reports of new burrows. It is thought that the population of Burrowing Owls is stable in Cape Coral, but in serious decline elsewhere.

Back in the late 1950's, developers purchased the land that was to become the City of Cape Coral for just under \$700,000. They brought in earth-moving equipment and completely leveled over 100 square miles of land and dug 400 miles of canals to make this a "water wonderland". Since Burrowing Owls follow disturbed land and love prairie-like habitat, they moved in from the eastern portions of Lee County and central Florida to establish the large colony of owls that exists today.

Birders, photographers, foreign visitors and locals enjoy watching and photographing these curious little birds. The owls are quite tolerant of people and many times, having an expensive camera with a long telephoto lens is a detriment as the owls are within 15-20 feet away from the observer. Often times if the owls hear someone outside the burrow, they will pop up to see what is going on outside rather than hide from the noise.

This winter, I have been giving tours to see the Burrowing Owls, and have met an incredible diversity of people. From hard-core photographers, to hard-core birders and everything in be-



Venice (FL) Audubon on a Burrowing Owl Tour

tween, they all have heard about the Burrowing Owl and wanted to get a look at them for themselves. I even had one couple drive over 3 hours at the crack of dawn to be on time for my eight AM tour.

I will be heading up to North Carolina in a few weeks, so there is no chance I will see chicks at my house this year. If anyone is traveling south next winter, I would love to show you these beautiful little birds. I can even throw in a trip up to see the threatened Florida Scrub Jay, another bird that you get to see up close and personal.

Florida Scrub Jay



Get Ready for Our Annual Membership Meeting!

Each year HCAS holds an annual membership meeting and potluck to celebrate the preceding year and to make plans for the next. The July 16 meeting will once again be held at the Lees-McRae Field Station. In addition to having a chance to socialize with other members and to talk about birds, we will have elections for Vice-President and Treasurer. We hope you all can join us for another fun evening.

HCAS Donates to Enlarge Eagle Habitat

The HCAS Board of Trustees has voted to support Grandfather Mountain's improvement of their eagle habitat by donating \$250 towards this important project.

The existing eagle habitat has walls but no top, preventing the Mountain from accepting birds that can fly and also allowing other birds and animals to enter the area and steal food from the eagles. The two enclosures will be combined into one large enclosure and a covering will be placed over the top.

While fundraising continues, work has begun and the hope is that the new habitat will be completed shortly. If you would like to help out with a donation please go to Grandfather Mountain's website at www.grandfather.com or call 828-733-8715.

Bettie Bond Retires From Board

Long-time HCAS Board member Bettie Bond has stepped down from the Board of Trustees. We'd like to thank Bettie for her many hours volunteering for HCAS at the Boone Heritage Days Festival and the Farm-City Day at Blair Farm where she and her husband, John, managed a table with exhibits about local birds and HCAS. Bettie's input will be missed at our board meetings, but we're happy to report that she has promised to continue representing HCAS at future festivals. Thanks for the help, Bettie!

Sue Wells Research Grant Available Soon

Last year HCAS created a grant in the memory of Sue Wells to provide funds for bird research in Western North Carolina. Sue was a driving force in the creation of High Country Audubon Society and served on the Board of Trustees until 2010.

Last year a grant of \$500 was presented to Jessica Krippel, a graduate student in biology at Western Carolina University. In addition to the original funds, Bill and Peg Steiner of Asheville donated another \$500 to add to Jessica's grant. Jessica is testing the hypothesis that aggressive male song sparrows will have more extra-pair young than nonaggressive males.

The Sue Wells Research Grant Program is available to high school or university students for research concerning birds of the North Carolina High Country. Information about how to apply will be posted soon on our website at www.highcountryaudubon.org.

Donations to the Sue Wells Research Grant program are always welcomed and will be used to support future research projects. Donations may be mailed to HCAS, PO Box 3746, Boone, NC 28607.

Bird the Blue Ridge Escarpment with Jesse Pope

On Sunday, April 28, Jesse Pope will be leading our field trip to the Blue Ridge Escarpment along Wilson Creek. We will start on the flank of Grandfather Mountain on the Blue Ridge Parkway and go south down the escarpment. Jesse says, "It's really neat to pick up migrants as they are moving upslope. You pick up a new species with every few hundred feet of the elevation drop it seems at this time of year." We could get warblers, tanagers, grosbeaks, thrushes, cuckoos, flycatchers, sparrows and more. We will meet at Lowe's Food at Grandfather Center at 7:00 am to enjoy a long half-day of birding.

Come Bird @ Our House

In April and May we have opportunities for birding in the areas around the homes of HCAS members. Directions and details of meeting times/places for carpooling will be posted on Yahoo group email closer to the dates of the bird walks. We hope many of you will join us for fun mornings of birding.

1. Powder Horn Mountain (Janet and Richard Paulette, 828-781-5708)

This year we're scheduling two dates for birding the Blue Ridge escarpment at Powder Horn Mountain: **Thursday, April 18, and Saturday, April 20.** We hope this will give more people opportunities to come. We'll meet at 8:00 am at the parking lot near the clubhouse at Powder Horn Mountain then drive to the Paulettes' house (elev. ~2000 feet). There'll be coffee and sweet bread/muffins there for you while birding from the deck. Then we'll walk a 2 1/2 mile loop along the roads (which include some fairly steep hills) and two small lakes. We should finish by about 11:00 am.

2. Linville (Jessie Dale, 828-260-0833)

We'll head to Jessie Dale's home on **Saturday, May 11**, and begin birding at 8:30 am. For this bird walk, we'll be birding at about 4000 ft. with damp woods, ponds, lakes, open pasture, access to state park trails, and nature conservancy property just down the road. Great trails run through it all. Be prepared to hike "up, down, and around". Finish up about 11:30 am followed by light lunch provided by Jessie.

3. Todd (Martha Cutler and Doug Blackford, 336-877-4031)

We're also scheduling two dates for birding in Todd (elev. ~ 3000 ft.): **Thursday, May 16, and Saturday, May 18.** Coffee and Stick Boy goodies will be available for you as we bird from the deck and backyard and take a short easy walk up into the pasture. We'll start at 8:00 am and finish about 10:30 am.

High Country Audubon Society Board

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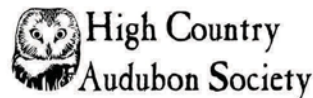
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High Country Hoots is published four times a year by the High Country Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Group email members receive the newsletter via electronic mail. There is also access to the newsletter on our website, and it is archived at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highcountryaudubon>

Visit our website at www.highcountryaudubon.org to join our group email.



PO Box 3746
Boone, NC 28607

www.highcountryaudubon.org

E-mail: contactus@highcountryaudubon.org

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

All events and meeting times are subject to change.

For updated information please visit www.highcountryaudubon.org.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Don't miss out! Please check our group email on Yahoo and the HCAS website calendar at www.highcountryaudubon.org for new field trips, updates to the schedule, directions, and carpooling arrangements. You may also contact the trip leader.

April		
10 Wed.	Valle Crucis Community Park Bird Walk First of the year weekly bird walk Leader: Curtis Smalling Dir. of Land Bird Conservation Audubon North Carolina Suggested donation of \$5 to Curtis	8:30 a.m.
Mid-month	Garlic Mustard Removal (when plants are flowering) Meat Camp Environmental Studies Area Bob Cherry (bcherry001@gmail.com)	
16 Tues.	HCAS monthly meeting Holiday Inn Express, Boone Program: "The Warblers are Coming!" Warbler ID quiz, "Watching Warblers" DVD	6:30 pm
18 Thurs.	Come Bird @ Our House Powder Horn Mountain Trip leaders: Janet & Richard Paulette	8:00 am - 11:00 am
20 Sat.	Come Bird @ Our House Powder Horn Mountain Trip leaders: Janet & Richard Paulette	8:00 am - 11:00 am
28 Sun.	Bird the Blue Ridge Escarpment Wilson Creek Important Bird Area Trip leader: Jesse Pope	7:30 am Long half-day

May		
3-4 Fri. - Sat.	Carolina Bird Club Spring Meeting Asheville, NC http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/meetings/Asheville2013.html	
10 Fri.	Point Counts - 5/10 through 6/30 Linville Gorge and Wilson Creek Bob Cherry (bcherry001@gmail.com)	
14 Tues.	Daniel Boone Native Gardens Bird Walk NOTE CHANGE IN DATE AND TIME.	8:30 am
11 Sat.	Come Bird @ Our House Linville Trip leader: Jessie Dale	8:30 am - 11:30 am

May (continued)		
16 Thurs.	Come Bird @ Our House Todd Trip Leaders : Martha Cutler & Doug Blackford	8:00 am - 10:30
17 Fri.	Spring Migration Count Grandfather Mountain area Jesse Pope (highcountrybirder@yahoo.com)	
18 Sat.	Come Bird @ Our House Todd Trip leaders: Martha Cutler & Doug Blackford	8:00 am - 10:30
21 Tues.	HCAS monthly meeting Holiday Inn Express, Boone Program: "Dragonflies & Damselflies" Ed Corey, Inventory Biologist, NC State Parks	6:30 pm

June		
1 Sat.	Point Counts continue through 6/30 Linville Gorge and Wilson Creek Bob Cherry (bcherry001@gmail.com)	
11 Tues.	Daniel Boone Native Gardens Bird Walk NOTE CHANGE IN DATE AND TIME.	8:30 am
18 Tues.	HCAS monthly meeting Holiday Inn Express, Boone Program: "Birding in Columbia" Simon Thompson Ventures Birding Tours	6:30 p.m.

And Now For Something Different

HCAS volunteers have been conducting point counts in the Wilson Creek Important Bird Area for the last four years, but this year we'll be trying something different. We've been asked by Curtis Smalling, Audubon NC's Director for Land Bird Conservation, and the US Forest Service to help with monitoring the impacts that removing non-native plants has on birds in the Linville Gorge area. Details are still being worked out and we will be putting information on our website as we get it and will send out messages on the group email and on Facebook. Volunteers are always welcome to come along and help.