

HIGH COUNTRY HOOTS



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

Volume 9 Issue 3

Aug-Sept-Oct 2017

Bird Walk, Potluck, & Annual Meeting

Valle Crucis Community Park, July 18, 2017

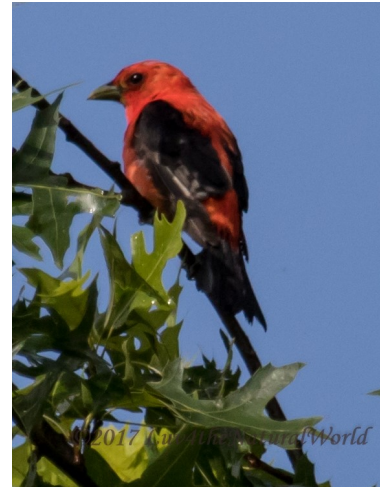
Photos (except for Scarlet Tanager) by Monty Combs



Searching for the **Sora**.

A beautiful **Scarlet Tanager** came out of hiding for all of us to enjoy.

Photo: Judi Sawyer



Taking care of business.



Guy McGrane was recognized as **HCAS Volunteer of the Year** and was presented with a Mast General Store gift card.



2017 Sue Wells Research Grant Recipient

Once again we used the Annual Membership Meeting as the setting to award the Sue Wells Research Grant. This year's winner, **Tyler Pyle**, was presented with a check for \$500 to support his research. He is looking at the influence of parasitism on Eastern Bluebird offspring as well as the influence of blood borne disease on bluebirds. Tyler is a graduate student at Appalachian State University.

For the first time we also awarded a runner-up grant. **Chelsea Corrigan**, from Western Carolina University, has been given \$250 to support her research on the variation in fear responses of urban and rural Eastern Bluebird nestlings.

We have asked both students to write up their research, when complete, for a future edition of *High Country Hoots* so we can all read about what they learned. In addition, Tyler will present a program at one of our monthly meetings to discuss his results. We look forward to learning what they found.

HCAS Board of Directors

At the HCAS annual meeting on July 18, the membership elected Vice President Richard Gray and Treasurer Janet Paulette to second terms. There were no nominations for President at the meeting. However, we are happy to announce that since that meeting, the Board of Directors, in accordance with the HCAS Bylaws, nominated and elected **Debbie Shetterly as President of HCAS!** We thank her for being willing to serve in this important role.

Debbie and her husband, Jimmy, moved to Todd from Polk County, NC. She had been working out of the Asheville office of The Nature Conservancy doing stewardship and land protection work. Since her move here, she continues to volunteer for The Nature Conservancy and also does independent consulting work in conservation. She and Jimmy have been active in HCAS, for example, helping with the native plant area at Valle Crucis Community Park, and participating in bird walks whenever possible.

In addition to the three officers mentioned above, the present Board also includes **Secretary Janet Palmer; Programs & Field Trips Chair Martha Cutler; Conservation Chair Guy McGrane;** and **Past President Bob Cherry.** The terms of the at-large members expired at the end of the annual meeting. Up to six at-large Board members will be elected by the current seven-person Board (officers and committee chairs) in the near future, followed by an announcement on the Yahoo group email and on the HCAS Facebook page. We encourage anyone interested in serving on the Board as an at-large member to let a member of the Board know of your interest.

We thank **Kristen Content, Sheryl McNair, Anna Pierce,** and **Beverly Saltonstall** for all their contributions to the operation of HCAS and hope they will consider serving again. We especially thank Bob Cherry for his guidance and leadership of the Board during the period the presidency has been vacant.



From left, **Debbie Shetterly**, Al Hooks, Alyson Browett, Bob Cherry, Richard Gray, and **Jimmy Shetterly** at VCCP.

Photo: Janet Palmer.

Third Tuesdays

Birding & Exploring the Pond Mountain Game Lands

Tuesday, August 15, 2017

In the last newsletter, we learned about Pond Mountain Game Lands through **Clifton Avery's** article and photos. On August 15, we'll have the opportunity to learn from Clifton in person at the monthly HCAS meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express in Boone.



Photo: Erica Perez

Clifton Avery (on the far right in the photo) will be speaking about how best to explore, and specifically bird, the Pond Mountain Game Lands, located in northwestern Ashe County, NC. He will also give a brief overview of who the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) is and what they do and will talk about the history of Pond Mountain. Clifton is a biological technician for NCWRC and a bird-watching tour guide for Ventures Birding Tours. He has previously worked for Audubon North Carolina studying Golden-winged Warblers and has worked on various bird projects in South America. Clifton has a bachelor's degree in biology from Appalachian State University.

Sweetwater Wetlands Park: Cleaning Gainesville's Wastewater & Stormwater & Attracting Birds, Too

Tuesday, September 19, 2017



The September meeting of HCAS will feature a presentation by **Debbie Segal**, an environmental scientist who has worked in the field of wetlands ecology, soil science, and environmental permitting for over 25 years. While working with Wetland Solutions, Inc., Debbie helped design and permit the Paynes Prairie Sweetwater Wetlands Park which will be the focus of her program. She is President of the Alachua (Florida) Audubon Society and also volunteers for the Florida Springs Institute where she advocates for environmental protection.

Sweetwater Branch is an urban creek that originates in Gainesville, Florida, and flows south to Paynes Prairie. The creek conveys treated wastewater from the wastewater treatment plant and stormwater from downtown Gainesville. The city constructed a 125-acre treatment wetland to remove nutrients and pollutants in the water before discharging onto Paynes Prairie and infiltrating into the Floridan Aquifer. Three parallel wetland treatment cells, all planted with native wetland plants, intercept and treat the creek flow by removing nitrogen, phosphorous, and other pollutants. Additional benefits include hydrologically restoring over 1,300 acres of prairie basin wetlands, enhancing wildlife habitat, and providing a public use recreational and educational facility.

Over 1 million dollars of public use infrastructure was designed and constructed at Sweetwater Wetlands Park and includes 3 miles of walking berms, an extensive boardwalk, an open air pavilion, multiple raised viewing platforms, and educational signs. Bird activity at Sweetwater has been phenomenal. To date, over 200 species of birds have been observed. And on the 2014 and 2015 Christmas Bird Counts, over 90 species were tallied at that site. Alachua Audubon Society leads bird walks every Wednesday morning September through May at 8:30 at Sweetwater Wetlands Park.

For more information, see <http://www.sweetwaterwetlands.org>



Coexisting with Wildlife:

A Practical Guide to Common Human-Wildlife Interactions & How to Handle Them

Tuesday, October 17, 2017



Photo: NC Wildlife
Resources Commission

Across North Carolina people are increasingly interacting with wildlife in their daily lives. These close encounters can be exciting, but too often they end in trouble for the animals involved. **Jessie Birckhead**, Extension Wildlife Biologist for the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, will share stories and practical advice for addressing interactions with wildlife - from helping cattle farmers deal with black vulture depredation to debunking the myth of "orphaned" fawns. Jessie will share tips and resources to address problem situations, and provide ideas for how to talk to others about wildlife.

A native North Carolinian, Jessie received her B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife Management from North Carolina State University and her M.S. in Wildlife Science from the University of Tennessee Knoxville. Prior to joining the Wildlife Resource Commission, she worked as an environmental educator, policy researcher, and biologist with state agencies and nonprofits in North Carolina and Tennessee. Most recently she worked as a science communicator for The Nature Conservancy. Jessie calls Durham, NC, home and can most often be found with her wildlife biologist husband and their mutt Sophie hiking, fishing, and birding around the Eno River.

Be sure to bring questions with you - after the presentation, we will have a Q & A session where you can ask all of your burning human-wildlife interaction questions.



Update: Nesting Bald Eagles at River Pointe

May 31, 2017



July 5, 2017



There was more exciting news on the nesting Bald Eagles after the May/June/July newsletter was published. On **May 31**, Guy McGrane “very quietly and unobtrusively” checked on the Bald Eagles’ nest and observed “at least 2 eaglets in the nest and one of them really looked MASSIVE--huge bill and fierce looking bird! The other appeared quite a bit smaller and fluffier.” See additional photos and details in his [eBird report](#).

On **July 5**, when Guy stopped by the nest, “both juvenile eagles were there and looking very healthy and happy. The older eaglet was on a branch about 4 feet above the nest, while the younger eaglet was splitting time between sitting in the nest and perching on an adjacent branch. I talked to a man visiting the area for about a week and he has been seeing both juvenile eagles flying around the area”. See additional photos and details in Guy’s [eBird report](#). Guy noted in his report “the fireworks show that is normally held just below the eagles’ nest was this year moved some distance away and the noise did not seem to bother the eagles.”

HCAS member Jan Hayes went by on **July 15** and “looked up to see three eagles floating on thermals very high right over my head”. Wonderful news!

Update: HCAS @ Work

Bluebirds @ Brookshire

Guy McGrane. badgerboy@wilkes.net

As of mid-July, seven Eastern Bluebird chicks had fledged from the birdhouses at Brookshire Park. There was one hatchling and four eggs about to pop in a second nest in the first box. So it was a very successful season, and we also had a couple of successful Tree Swallow nests. The juvenile birds can now be seen gracing the area near the park. We are still looking for volunteers to record data and monitor the nest boxes for the remainder of the season and next year. Let me know if you are interested in helping.

Photos: left, Richard Gray; center, Judi Sawyer;
right, Guy McGrane



Nests Galore !!

Happily, in addition to the **Bald Eagle** and **Eastern Bluebird** fledglings, there are plenty of nesting stories to make us smile!



Judi Sawyer has been participating in Cornell's **Project NestWatch** for the past two years. "It has been both an incredibly rewarding experience and, at times, a difficult, even heartbreaking one. There have been successes...17 House Wren fledglings so far this year!!...and failures. There has also been a surprise or two, like discovering that the House Wrens decided to lay their second clutch in the old Purple Martin house that was here when I moved in. I didn't realize it until I saw the parents bring food to the nest! Through it all, it has been worth it, and it's a valuable Citizen Science project if you're willing to devote some time and energy to it. Check it out at www.nestwatch.org!" **House Wren** photo (left) by Judi Sawyer.

Judi's photos below: (left) **Tree Swallow** on nest; (center) eggs, and (right) hatchlings.



April 20, 2017, Mourning Dove on nest, taken during *Come Bird @ My HotSpot* at Powder Horn Mountain.

Photo: Beverly Saltonstall



On **May 18, Martha Cutler and Doug Blackford** checked out the **Cliff Swallow** nests at the bridge in Todd near the Riverside Restaurant (at the junction of Brownwood Rd. and Railroad Grade Rd.) They saw at least 13 active nests and a couple of damaged ones, and there may have been a few more nests not visible from where they stood under the bridge. **Jim Seiferheld** headed over there several days later and got some great photos of the nests (left).

On **June 8, Sheryl and Wes McNair and Janet and Richard Paulette**, headed out Watauga River Rd. to the bridge at Rominger Rd. They also got great views of **Cliff Swallows** with their nests tucked under the bridge.



An **Ovenbird** nest (right) was the star of **Guy McGrane's June 1, eBird report** "I went to water some low plants just steps into the woods off the BRP, at milepost 256, the intersection of Don Bare Road, on the eastern corner, and had the incredible fortune to almost, but not quite, step on this nest. I was startled by a brown blur scurrying much too fast to see across the forest floor, and went to look at where it came out of and found this nest. I've been looking for one for many years with no success."

"Can you find the nest?—it's right in the middle." The lower photo which was "taken with the camera just off the ground, shows the tiny slot for entrance."

Nests Galore !! (continued)



Sheryl McNair found this **Blue-headed Vireo** nest along the trail at Trout Lake (Moses Cone) on **June 12**.



On **June 14** on the Boone Fork trail at Price Park, **Guy McGrane** found a large **snapping turtle** digging into the packed gravel trail, apparently attempting to lay some eggs.



On **July 6** at Wrightsville Beach, NC, **Jim Seiferheld** took these photos (above) of a **Black Skimmer** with nestling and fish and of a **Least Tern** with eggs.



Bill Dunson has a home on southern Manasota Key, FL, where the Coastal Wildlife Club organizes Turtle Patrols. They set nest markers for **loggerhead sea turtles** and walk the beaches daily to document nest success. Bill took this photo of a sea turtle hatchling on **July 7**.



White-breasted Nuthatch Baby Overcomes Cat Attack

Article and photos: Amber McNamara, DMV



During the busy spring and summer months, the May Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (MWRC), like centers nationwide, receives scores of baby birds, bunnies, squirrels, and more that are victims of cat attacks. With sharp, needle-like teeth and loads of bacteria, cat bites can inflict fractures, infections, or even death.

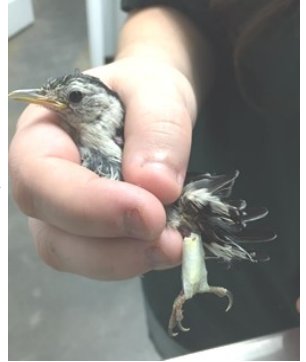
On June 1, the MWRC received a fledgling White-breasted Nuthatch who was the victim of cat attack. Weighing in at only 14 grams, roughly the weight of a walnut, she suffered from multiple puncture wounds and a fracture of her left tibiotarsus. The trauma pushed the bone, located between the knee and the ankle, through the skin; the foot was cold and the baby had no movement of her toes. Staff immediately administered pain medications and antibiotics, cleaned the wounds, and placed a splint made from micropore paper tape. After receiving supplemental fluids under the skin, the baby

was made comfortable in a washcloth doughnut in the ICU. Once feeling better, she was offered mealworms, soaked in vitamin water, every 30 minutes.

In a (rapidly) growing baby with a lightning fast metabolism, splint changes may need to happen as often as every 3-4 days. At her first bandage change on June 5, she was moving her toes better, although still not standing well. By the next bandage change, on June 8, the fracture was progressing nicely and the nuthatch was standing (as much as nuthatches do) – barely a week after the injury!

On June 13, staff noted an additional injury in the back toe of the “good” leg. Given nuthatches’ need to cling to vertical surfaces and maneuver up, down, and sideways, only time would tell whether the combination of injuries might threaten her successful rehabilitation. As the baby grew, hand-feeding frequency was decreased to every hour, then every 2 hours, then was discontinued as she learned to eat on her own. Even in her indoor “fledgie” enclosure, she began to creep up and down on the provided bark.

Looking strong and healthy, WBNU 17-0376 moved to an outdoor flight enclosure on July 12. She flew upwards and immediately clung to the ceiling, perched beak down on the bark, then scooted sideways. In a short period, she demonstrated every maneuver that a nuthatch needs to master. With a few days of flight conditioning, she will be ready for release to the location where she was found in Banner Elk.



Raptor Migration Fall 2017

In the fall of each year, thousands of raptors glide above our High Country mountain ridge tops, using thermal air columns as they migrate south. Two excellent viewing spots are **Mahogany Rock on the Blue Ridge Parkway, milepost 235, and Linville Peak at Grandfather Mountain**. Both of these are official count sites during September.

Mahogany Rock

During September, on any day, join other watchers and official counters at Mahogany Rock. We're planning to have an HCAS Hawk Watch at Mahogany Rock, but we will be monitoring migration conditions before we schedule a date. As we get into September, please keep an eye on the Yahoo group email for details of the hawk watch.

Whatever day you go to Mahogany Rock, you'll (hopefully!) have the opportunity to view migrating Broad-winged Hawks – and monarch butterflies! - plus the possibility of spotting Osprey, Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, American Kestrels, Merlins, Peregrine Falcons, Cooper's Hawks, and Sharp-shinned Hawks.

For information on Mahogany Rock, see [NC Birding Trail, Mountain Guide](#), p. 16, and here is a link to a [Guide to Hawk Watching at Mahogany Rock](#).

Grandfather Mountain

Daily in September on Linville Peak at Grandfather Mountain, there will be trained counters and volunteers who will record the number and type of raptors. If you'd like to volunteer to help with the count, please email **Amy Renfranz** at amy@grandfather.com.

There will be a **Hawk Watch Orientation on Friday, September 1, at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.** at the Top Shop Visitor Center (on the 2nd floor). Please RSVP with Amy if you're interested in attending that volunteer session, so that she can leave your name at the gate. The training is typically around 1.5 - 2 hours and includes some field time on Linville Peak. It's an orientation to in-flight raptor identification, the impact of weather conditions on migration, site geography for spotting, data recording and more! There will be printed resources available as well as books for sale. Jesse Pope, Executive Director of the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation, will lead the training.

Anyone who volunteers to help with the Hawk Watch and participates for at least 4 hours will receive a free pass to the mountain for that day. If you volunteer for 40 hours, you will get a free annual pass to Grandfather Mountain.

For more information on the hawk watch, email Amy Renfranz at amy@grandfather.com or call her at 828-733-4326. Also, for hawk watch information, visit [Grandfather Mountain Hawk Watch](#).

Meet Bill & Margaret Dunson



Lemon Bay sunrise at the Dunsons' FL home. Photo: Bill Dunson

Bill earned a BS in zoology/biology from Yale University and a PhD from University of Michigan. He then taught various subjects related to physiology, marine biology, tropical ecology, ecotoxicology and ecology over 35 years at Pennsylvania State University, as well as conducting research on the physiological ecology of fish, reptiles (especially estuarine turtles and sea snakes) and amphibians. After retirement, Bill worked four years as a biologist for the Seminole Tribe in Big Cypress Swamp.

Bill has conducted numerous nature walks and talks in Florida dealing with the natural history of coastal plain, estuarine and beach ecosystems. His specialty is "Birds, Bugs and Blooms" which is another way of saying he is interested in anything natural that he encounters.



Photo: Rob Minarik

Some of you have already had the opportunity to meet Bill and Margaret Dunson – at the monthly Brookshire Park Nature Walk or at the weekly Wednesday Valle Crucis Community Park bird walk or at the May bird walk at Martha and Doug's home in Todd.

They have a home on Manasota Key, Englewood, FL where they spend winters. Beginning in 1994, Bill and Margaret designed a yard habitat, especially for wildlife, on a double lot on Manasota Key, with 160 species of plants. They also developed a number of concepts and methods for maximizing the potential of small parcels for maintaining bird and butterfly populations.

From 2002 until November 2016, they also owned a 107-acre farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and worked intensively managing and restoring it as wildlife habitat. Now they are actively looking for a summer home near Boone. They have not yet found the right home and will rent until they do.



Bill taking picture of Dung Beetle for his blog.

Photo: Rachel Nellis

Margaret is a retired biology teacher, also from Penn State University, with a special interest in birds, native plants and gardening. In the photo, Margaret is standing on the right in the pollinator field she planted at their VA farm. She was heavily involved, along with Bill, in constructing trails at Wildflower Preserve in Englewood, FL; in monitoring and reporting on biological diversity there; and in recruiting and advising volunteers who are developing the new park/preserve.

Over the years, Bill and Margaret have given many nature walks, evening power-point talks and yard tours. Some of their recent experiences with nature are reported in [Bill's nature blog](#) which includes photos.

They'll be back in the High Country soon to stay for several months, so we wish them luck on their house-hunting and look forward to sharing nature experiences with them!

Birding in Spain

Article & photos by Martha Cutler

This June Doug and I got a taste of birding in Spain. We were in the country for about 18 days and arranged two separate outings with experienced guides. It was not primarily a birding trip so the rest of the time, whenever the opportunity arose, it was just us with our binoculars and the Collins Bird Guide app (which I found very helpful).



Southern Gray Shrike

Our first outing was on the island of Tenerife, one of the Canary Islands. Mathías González and a friend took us to look for species endemic to the Canaries and to Tenerife in particular. We saw both the Bolle's and Laurel pigeons, African Blue Tit, Blue Chaffinch, Southern Gray Shrike and Bertholet's Pipit. I have to say that I thought it was neat to see the (boring old?) Rock Dove in its natural habitat nesting on cliff faces far from urban areas.

Our second outing was to the Delta de l'Ebre Parque Nacional in the delta of the Ebro river. This is a flat rice-growing area with lots of shorebirds. Despite the fact that it was not the best time of the year to see high numbers of species, we spotted a total of 59 including an unusual subspecies of the fairly common Yellow Wagtail to the great excitement of our guide, Fernando Navarrete. (Would Doug and I have known it was not where it was expected to be? Hardly, but I did get a photo to document it.)



Yellow Wagtail

I include the names of our two guides since they were both knowledgeable and helpful. If anyone is interested in birding in either of these areas I will be happy to pass on contact information.

Swifts Night(s) Out !!

Chimney Swifts are residents in the Carolinas from early April through September or even October, in some places. They generally start building their nests in May. Both sexes help build the nest by breaking off dead twigs, fastening them together with their saliva, and then fastening them to the insides of chimneys or large hollow logs. They lay 3-6 white eggs mid-June. Unlike most songbirds, incubation requires 18 days. Both adults incubate and care for the young, which stay in or near the nest for 24 days or longer. The babies brace their short tails against the vertical walls and exercise their wings until ready to emerge.



After nesting season, the Chimney Swifts start flocking together, and a thousand or more may roost in a single large chimney. There are numerous chimneys in the HCAS region which attract the flocks of Chimney Swifts. This year we are again scheduling two viewing opportunities. Photo of **Chimney Swifts** by Monty Combs.

Thurs. Sep. 7: Lees-McRae College
Main St. W, Banner Elk.
Trip Leaders: Betsy Wauters & Betsy Murrelle

Come join members and friends of HCAS in front of the North Carolina Building at Lees-McRae College to watch the amazing circling of "flying cigars" as they fly in and eventually descend into the chimney at the college. We will meet at the college on **Sep. 7 around 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.** Bring a chair and picnic supper, if you want, or just come and enjoy the show at sundown!

We're also hopeful that Nina Fischesser, Director of the May Wildlife Rehabilitation Center at Lees-McRae College, will have some Chimney Swifts ready for release that evening.

Sun. Sep. 10: Wilkesboro Elementary School
1248 School St, Wilkesboro
Trip Leaders: Brenda & Monty Combs
Rain date, Sun. Sep. 17, led by Guy McGrane

Wilkes Swifts Night Out will be at **Wilkesboro Elementary School** on **Sunday, Sep. 10**. We will gather in the parking lot in front of the chimney of an old unused boiler that the swifts have adopted. The chimney is shorter and on the same level as the parking lot. The swifts circle closely overhead and the sound is fantastic. You get a very close view of their activity.

Bring a picnic if you'd like; we will start gathering at **6:00 p.m.** The swifts will start circling slowly and by 7:00 p.m. will start entering the chimney.

From Boone, follow Highway 421 South and take exit 286 B for NC 268, which is the first exit after you cross the Yadkin River. At the end of the ramp, go straight across NC 268 onto School Street. Follow School Street to its end. The parking lot will be on the right. There will be plenty of room to set out chairs to enjoy the event.

Mourning Warbler on the Parkway!!



Mourning Warbler by Judi Sawyer



Viewing the **Mourning Warbler** by Monty Combs

We were all excited to see Merrill Lynch's Yahoo post about his May, 20, 2017, Nature Conservancy field trip to Grandfather Mountain along the Tanawha Trail that parallels the Blue Ridge Parkway. His group heard a **Mourning Warbler** singing for at least 5 minutes but unfortunately was never able to visually confirm its identity. This bird is very unusual for the High Country. He suggested that anyone looking for it should walk along the Parkway shoulder between the viaduct and the Wilson Creek overlook parking area. Several days later, HCAS members Al Hooks and Sheryl McNair found the **Mourning Warbler** just where Merrill had described. The **Mourning Warbler** was so cooperative, and many others came and were successful in hearing and spotting it. See Al Hook's [eBird Report](#) for photos and a recording of the warbler singing. There were also reports of **Canada Warblers**, **Veery**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, and **American Redstart**.



Canada Warbler by Al Hooks

So many took advantage of the wonderful opportunity to see this beautiful bird, and for some it was a life bird! Thank you Merrill for pointing the way!

Kudos Corner

We are delighted to welcome these new HCAS members!

Victoria Darlington	Jimmy Shetterly
Juliana Henderson	Gary & Janice Sortor
Tonya Lee	Hutch & Patt Sprunt
Sara Mayhew	Bill & Vicky Wise

Thank you to the following who have supported HCAS with donations:

Brenda & Monty Combs	Janet & Richard Paulette
Martha Cutler & Doug Blackford	Vicky & Bill Wise
Boonedoggle (group of friends)	
Newcomers of Catawba Valley, donation given in appreciation for the birding program presented to the group by HCAS member Bob Williams.	

Female Bird Song Project

We've all heard the males of bird species singing their hearts out, but female birds of many species also sing. Sheryl McNair shared a post from eBird on the [Female Bird Song Project](#).

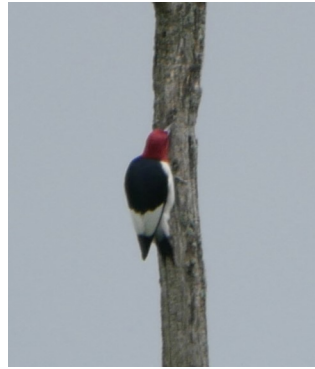
The project needs recordings of female songs from around the world to help researchers understand how the diverse songs of songbirds evolved. You can help by observing and recording female songs through your eBird checklists. For more information about which female birds sing and about how you can help, go to [Listening to Natures Divas](#).



Female Northern Cardinal, one of the female singers. Photo: Don Mullaney

Through Our Lens

Mama Raccoon. Photo: Monty Combs



Red-headed Woodpecker

Photo: Al Hooks



Savannah Sparrow

Photo: Al Hooks



Golden-winged Warbler

Photo: Bull Dunson

Roseate Spoonbill landing
in the midst of wading birds
@ Mary's Pond, Bear Island
WMA, SC.

Photo: Doris Ratchford



**Black-necked Stilts, Wood Stork and
Great Egret** flying.

Photo: Doris Ratchford



Odd Couple, Reddish Egret & Surf Scoter.

Photo: Bill Dunson



Great Horned Owl.

Photo Beverly Saltonstall



Wood Stork. Photo: Doris Ratchford

Through Our Lens

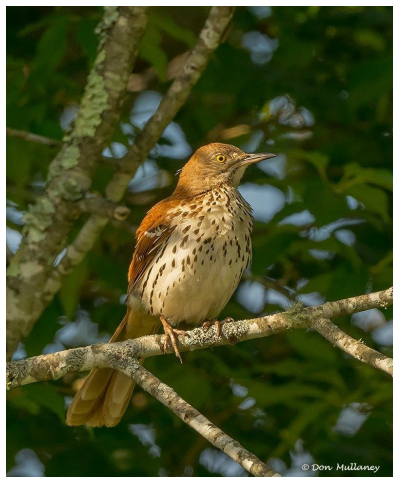


Cedar Waxwing. Photo: Alyson Browett

“Jumping Jack” Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Photo: Don Mullaney

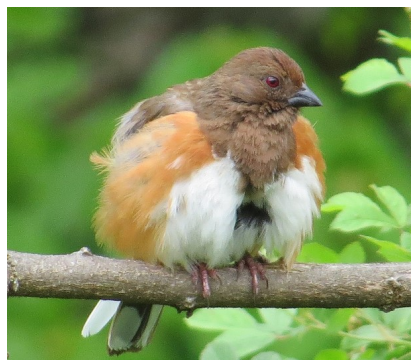


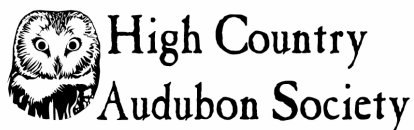
Great Crested Flycatcher. Photos: Cindy Darling



Brown Thrasher. Photo: Don Mullaney

Eastern Towhee (left) Magnolia Warbler (right)
Photos: Guy McGrane





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Visit our website for more information about HCAS and birding in the High Country. Group email members receive the newsletter via electronic mail. A link on the homepage has instructions for joining our group email, and for archived newsletters.

www.HighCountryAudubon.org

High Country Audubon Society Board of Directors

Debbie Shetterly - President

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Janet Palmer - Secretary & Education Chair

Janet Paulette - Treasurer & Membership Chair

Martha Cutler - Programs & Field Trips Chair

Guy McGrane - Conservation Chair

Bob Cherry - Past President

The 2017 - 2018 at-large Board members will be elected by the Board in the near future.



Support Our Birds and High Country Audubon Society!

\$10 / year / person

Please renew your support by July 31st of each year.

HCAS appreciates any additional contributions you make to support our local efforts related to protection of birds, their habitats, and our environment.

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.

For sponsorship information, please email

contactus@highcountryaudubon.org

Make your donation online at www.HighCountryAudubon.org

or

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

High Country Audubon Society

Attention: Membership

PO Box 3746, Boone, NC 28607

Donate with PayPal

You can now make donations to HCAS on our website, www.HighCountryAudubon.org, through PayPal.

You do not need a PayPal account to take advantage of this convenient way to donate.

You can donate using a credit card or using your PayPal account. Just go to the Join/Donate tab on the website, and you'll see three "Donate" buttons: Annual HCAS Membership; Sue Wells Research Grant; and Other.

Choose a button and just follow instructions – it's that easy!

Support Our Sponsors

Please support our sponsors and let them know of your support!! For example, if you have dinner at Vidalia's, tell them you're from HCAS and that you appreciate Vidalia's sponsorship of HCAS!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Aug-Sept-Oct 2017

Please check HCAS Yahoo group email regularly for changes/additions to the calendar.

August			September (continued)		
2 Weekly Wed.	Valle Crucis Community Park Bird Walk Trip Leaders: HCAS members	8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	10 Sun.	Swifts Night Out Wilkesboro Elementary School Trip Leaders: Brenda & Monty Combs Rain date: Sun. Sep. 17, Led by Guy McGrane	~6:00 p.m.
5 Sat.	Come Bird @ Brookshire Trip leader: Guy McGrane Meet at parking area near the picnic shelter. Directions to Park	8:00 a.m.– 10:00 a.m.	mid- Sept.	Mahogany Rock Hawk Watch Blue Ridge Parkway, Milepost 235 Check Yahoo group email for details.	TBA
5 Sat.	2017 Audubon North Carolina Chapter Day North Carolina Zoo, Asheboro	9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	19 Tues.	HCAS monthly meeting Holiday Inn Express, Boone Program: Sweetwater Wetlands Park Gainesville, FL Presented by Debbie Segal	6:30 p.m.
15 Tues.	HCAS monthly meeting Holiday Inn Express, Boone Program: <i>Birding & Exploring the Pond Mountain Game Lands</i> Presented by Clifton Avery	6:30 p.m.	9/29 – 9/30 Fri.-Sat.	Carolina Bird Club Fall Meeting Litchfield Beach, SC	

September		
1 - 30 Daily	Hawk Watch at Grandfather Mountain Contact Amy Renfranz to volunteer or for more info. Email amy@grandfather.com or call 828-733-4326	
1 Fri.	Hawk Watch Orientation Grandfather Mountain, Top Shop Visitor Center Leader: Jesse Pope RSVP: Amy Renfranz (see above for contact info)	10 a.m. & 2 p.m.
2 Sat.	Come Bird @ Brookshire See Saturday Aug. 5th for details.	8:00 a.m.– 10:00 a.m.
6 Weekly Wed.	Valle Crucis Community Park Bird Walk Trip Leader: Curtis Smalling/HCAS members	8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
7 Thurs.	Swifts Night Out Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk Trip Leaders: Betsy Wauters & Betsy Murrelle	~6:30 p.m.

October		
1 Sat.	Come Bird @ Brookshire See Saturday Aug. 5th for details.	8 a.m. – 10 a.m.
4 Weekly Wed.	Valle Crucis Community Park Bird Walk Leader: Curtis Smalling/HCAS member	8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
17 Tues.	HCAS monthly meeting Holiday Inn Express, Boone Program: <i>Coexisting with Wildlife</i> Presented by Jessie Birckhead Last meeting until March 20, 2018	6:30 p.m.
Mid- Oct. Wed.	Valle Crucis Community Park Bird Walk Last VCCP bird walk of the year!	8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.