

HIGH COUNTRY HOOTS

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

PROFILE TRAIL FIELD TRIP PART OF GFM NATURALIST WEEKEND



Profile Rock at Grandfather Mountain
Photo by Jim Morton

The May 16 field trip to Grandfather Mountain's Profile Trail will be led by High Country Audubon Society President Jesse Pope.

Pope, who is also Chief Naturalist at Grandfather will be conducting the walk as part of the park's Naturalist Weekend.

The hike will last from 7:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. and those interested should meet at the Profile trailhead on NC 105, a

quarter of a mile north of the intersection of NC 105 & NC 184.

Participants are encouraged to bring their binoculars and will make their way through some of the most densely populated bird habitat in North Carolina.

Grandfather Mountain's Naturalist Weekend is a two-day event occurring May 16-17, with fascinating programs designed to help guests experience "nature on a whole different level."

Another bird-related event during the weekend is "Attracting Birds to your Backyard," a program led by GFM Naturalist Katie Gray and Marty Martin from Blue Ridge Birds and Gardens on May 16 at 11:30 a.m.

A hummingbird banding workshop occurs Sunday, May 17 at 9:30 a.m. and will be conducted by Catawba County Interpretive Ranger Dwayne Martin. Martin is one of only four people in N.C. licensed to capture and band hummingbirds.

All programs are included with regular park admission. For a full list of the planned events please visit www.grandfather.com.

TOP AUSTRALIAN NATURALIST IN BOONE MAY 19

Denise Lawungkurr Goodfellow, a writer, birder, natural history guide and biological consultant will be speaking at the High Country Audubon Society's monthly meeting May 19. The meeting is scheduled for

6:30 p.m. at the La Quinta Inn in Boone and is open to the public.

Goodfellow has carried out fauna surveys across remote north western Australia, dealing with large venomous snakes, crocodiles and

unfriendly buffaloes.

In 1981 Goodfellow stood before Darwin City Council in an attempt to save mangrove habitat. Mangroves in Darwin Harbour are among

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Page 2 for More Details

May		
16	Birding the Profile Trail Field	7:30 a.m.
19	Monthly Meeting	6:30 p.m.

June		
6	Field Trip	All Day
16	Monthly Meeting	6:30 p.m.

July		
18	Elk Knob State Park Field Trip	All Day
21	Annual Meeting	5:30 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 Peregrine



- The name "peregrine" means wanderer, and the Peregrine Falcon has one of the longest migrations of any North American bird.
- The Peregrine Falcon is a very fast flier, averaging 25-34 mph in traveling flight, and reaching speeds up to 69 mph in direct pursuit of prey. During its spectacular hunting stoop from heights over .62 miles, the peregrine may reach speeds of 200 mph as it drops toward its prey.
- Peregrine Falcons call the High Country home with three local pairs. There are only 11 pairs in N.C. Grandfather Mountain, Lost Cove and the Linville Gorge all provide the vertical rock cliffs these birds need for nesting and hunting.

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

Congratulations to Mike Rose for coming up with the winning newsletter title, "High Country Hoots." Mike will receive a Droll Yankees birdfeeder from Blue Ridge Birds and Gardens.

Top Australian Naturalist cont.

the world's richest in plants, birds and other wildlife. In the 1990s she highlighted the plight of mangroves by organizing bird watching soirees at the local sewage ponds. The guests wore evening dresses and the authority overseeing the ponds donated champagne, food and even a string quartet. Later Goodfellow held two of these soirees for national television.

Learning that indigenous people lacked representation she tried to win their trust by accepting an invitation from a senior woman to catch a snake. She spent four hours in a waterhole inhabited by estuarine crocodiles



Denise Lawungkerr Goodfellow (center) looks for snakes in Australia's Top End.

before succeeding. Denise caught a water python. The indigenous people regard this snake as a child of the rainbow serpent.

To the horror of the indigenous women, Goodfellow was threatened with prosecution. To protect her they adopted her because as a "black" woman she could hunt legally. She was given "dreamings" including that of a Yawk and Yawk (Mermaid Spirit) and an estuarine crocodile. Her children all have Python Dreaming because of the snake she caught. Her husband, Michael, has Pied Heron Dreaming.

In the early 1990s, Goodfellow ran a national campaign against operators in Kakadu National Park who were ramming crocodiles with boats to make them jump for visitors. The indigenous owners of Kakadu were so angry about the mistreatment of crocodiles that they were prepared to stop visitors from coming to the park.

In acknowledgment of her work to improve the life of her relatives and help them look

after the country, elders named Denise "Lawungkurr" after a dreamtime woman still revered for her mediation skills. She is also called "old lady," a respectful term meaning "wise lady."

Goodfellow has worked with many film crews. In 2000 she was contracted as an interpreter and transcriber on the Lonely Planet's "Guide to Aboriginal Australia."

Her book Birds of Australia's Top End has been described as winning "top honors" (*American Birdwatcher's Digest*) and "a gem" (*Waterfowl & Wetlands*). Her autobiographical Quiet Snake Dreaming is being used for literacy projects and cross-cultural awareness courses.

Goodfellow also lectures on Australian birds and Aboriginal perspectives and marsupial biology for the American students at the University of New South Wales' summer school. She is presently pursuing a PhD on American birdwatchers.

Birding the south end of the Blue Ridge Parkway

Saturday, June 6 - All Day

Mt. Pisgah, Devil's Courthouse and other locations around milepost 400. This section of the Parkway has very diverse bird habitat from rocky crags, to open old fields, to dense hardwood forests. Led by Jesse Pope.

June Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, June 16 - 6:30 p.m.

La Quinta Inn, Boone

Topic subject to change. Donald Mullaney will give a slide show presentation on hummingbird photography and how to set up a multi-flash system for photographing the tiny birds.

Is there a program topic you would like to hear about?

Let us know!

High Country Audubon Society

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HCAS Member Photo Gallery



American Redstart

By Donald Mullaney

Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher



By Monty Combs

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

"Celebrate Birds in Culture"



The Rainbow Crow is a story of the Lanape tribe of the Eastern U.S.

Why is the American Crow black?

The crow brought fire to Earth from the Great Spirit turning the crow's feathers black and its voice hoarse.



Native people believed birds carried messages to the spirits. Because of its speed, the Peregrine Falcon was a special messenger to the spirits.

Woodpeckers were considered sacred because of their fire-colored head feathers. They were associated with the sun, a life sustaining element.



Some tribes believed that ducks aided the dead on their journey to the afterworld.

Burial sites often contained pottery and other items with ducks on them.

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) is the brainchild of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center (SMBC) and was created in the early 1990s.

At that time, the staff of the SMBC recognized that a public program would enable thousands of people to learn about migratory birds, their migration and their conservation. The first IMBD celebration was hosted at the National Zoo in Washington D.C. in 1993.

Environment for the Americas, home of IMBD, is a non-profit organization working to increase awareness of birds and their conservation throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The group has set the official date for IMBD in the United States and Canada as the second Saturday in May each year. However, the group knows that this doesn't fit everyone and their birds. For the south, migratory birds may have already passed through and it might be too early for the north.

Environment for the Americas encourages people and groups to host events or programs whenever it best fits. Today, IMBD programs are held year-round. Because of the planned activities for Grandfather Mountain's Naturalist Weekend, Jesse Pope has declared that the park will celebrate International Migratory Bird Day the weekend of May 16-17. Activities are planned that include birding along the Profile Trail, learning about attracting birds to

backyards and a very special hummingbird program.

Each year a theme is picked for IMBD and 2009's is "Celebrate Birds in Culture."

Birds have always been important to native people. They have been found in storytelling, art, music and dance, spirituality, food and conservation.

See the right and left sidebars for examples.

More information and photos can be found at www.birdday.org.



Tribes of the South, East and Midwest in the U.S. believed that warriors who wore a Falcon mask during a hunt ceremony would gain speed and agility.



Native people of the Caribbean believed that hummingbirds were the pollinators of life on earth.

High Country Audubon Society Board

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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:

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Attention: Janet Palmer
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