



The Piedmont Birder

Newsletter of the Piedmont Bird Club

Aug-Oct, 2007 Volume 18, No. 3
Newsletter of the

Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833
Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

piedmontbirdclub.org

Editor: Louise Brown

Committee Members: Diana Bowman,
Emily Tyler, Denise Poulos, George
Wheaton, Melissa Whitmire

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*Field Trip

The next deadline for newsletter items
is Oct. 15, 2007

Contact Louise Brown: 685-5043;
piedmontbirder@triad.rr.com.

OFFICERS FOR 2007-2008

President:	Susan Weimer
Vice President:	Beth Bursuck
Recording	
Secretary:	Diana Bowman
Corresponding	
Secretary:	Peggy Ware
Treasurer:	Lary Treanor
Members-at-Large:	Don Allemann Jim Strickland
Past President	Dan Chambers

The Summit /Haw River SP 4/21/07

by Emily Tyler

A record number of twenty birders turned out for this year's early spring trip to The Summit on the Guilford/Rockingham County line. This was the Club's first field trip to this site in two years as the 2006 trip was rained out. Since the 2005 trip, the date was moved a couple of weeks earlier in the season. That, in addition to the abnormally cold weather in early April (Easter), contributed to fewer migrants and summer residents, birds which breed here. Thus, the total number of species was down from previous trips, 42 compared with 58 in 2005.

The temperature when we started down the trail to the lake was about 60 degrees. It was up to 75 when we left three hours later. The Great Blue Heron rookery seems to be growing. From the end of the boardwalk we could see them flying by every few minutes carrying twigs and other nesting materials.

Some of the stand-out species sighted included Wood Ducks, Broad-winged Hawk, White-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireos, and the following warblers: Northern Parula, Pine, Prairie, Prothonotary, Hooded and the Common Yellowthroat.

Some of the participants moved from The Summit to the Plainfield Marsh afterwards for a very pleasant couple of hours watching two American Bitterns, a Sora and Red-headed Woodpeckers. We were perched on the hillside off the road watching the marsh (one of us who shall remain nameless was perched in a tree for a better look!). The bitterns can be

-- see Summit, cont' on p. 3

Randolph County 4/28/07

by Louise Brown

Mark and Jane Lewis hosted yet another fine birding event at their home and property. They own 210 acres of land, providing a variety of habitats: woods of mixed hardwoods and pine, creek, pond, and open fields. They have maintained it as naturally as possible, keeping any improvements to house and outbuildings at a low-impact level on the environment. For instance, the house and outbuildings were built in areas that were already open. They are "off the grid" – having built their house to be powered completely by solar energy. The most major change (to the environment) they have made is to create a couple of ponds, a beneficial change, since both floral and faunal diversity has increased as a result. It's been especially beneficial for amphibians (9 species noted so far), quail, turkeys, wood ducks (one of which nested within a couple of weeks of adding a duck box), herons, raptors, and other passing waterfowl such as Hooded Mergansers. They have cut a number of hiking trails through the woods, but by removing only small trees and underbrush.

There was a record turnout of participants, at least 30, mostly PBC members. The weather was perfect, sunny, but cooled by a nice breeze. We saw many good birds, including quite a few warblers: Northern Parula, Magnolia, Prothonotary, Prairie, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Yellow-throated, Hooded, Black-and-white, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, Pine, Yellow-throated, Yellow-breasted Chat, American Redstart, and Worm-eating.

-- see Rand. Co., cont' on p. 3

From the PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Susan Weimer

Meet the 2007 – 2008 Officers and Committee Chairs of the Piedmont Bird Club:

President/History & Archives: Susan Weimer. Susan has the great distinction of being a “rare bird.” Her leadership style is unparalleled. You will see her conducting the meetings with style and grace. She also has a keen interest in the history of the Club and therefore serves as its Historian.

Vice-President/ Program Chair: Beth Bursuck. A relative newcomer, Beth is enthusiastic about her role as Vice-President and chair of the Program Committee. Hard working, organized, and extremely capable, Beth knows how to “take care of business.”

Recording Secretary: Diana Bowman. You cannot find a more meticulous person to be in charge of the minutes. Diana provides the Club with these important historical documents.

Corresponding Secretary: Peggy Ware. Efficient, caring, and charming, Peggy keeps in touch with our members. Her get-well cards and “how-are-you” cards are most appreciated by the club members. If you know that someone is sick or is celebrating an event, let Peggy know.

Treasurer: Lary Treanor. Preparing accurate treasurer's reports, and maintaining the checking account, money market account and CD accounts are Lary's charge. If you want a reliable person to care for your money, Lary is the man.

Past President: Dan Chambers. With an email ID of “Instructus,” it is not hard to miss the fact that Dan is a teacher. When Dan, a whirlwind of energy, accepted the position of President, he got not only his feet wet, but he also jumped right into the lake.

Member-at-Large/Field Trip Chair: Don Alleman. Don accepted the duties of the Field Trip chair enthusiastically. Although a relatively new member, he is moving forward energetically providing a slate of Field Trips that will benefit our members. Who knows? You might see a “life bird” on one of these trips.

Member-at-Large/Publicity Chair: Jim Strickland. Another relatively new member, Jim brings eagerness to the.



-- Perch, cont'.

Club that is welcomed. New ideas and thoughts from our new members-at-large bring vitality to the Club. He also agreed to be the Publicity chair **Bird Count Committee: Herb Hendrickson.** Awesome! Herb has extensive knowledge of birds, their habits, and their habitats. Exceptionally qualified, Herb directs the Christmas and Spring Bird Counts.

Conservation Committee: Cal Weimer.

This is one hard working man. Cal has spent countless hours devising a notebook for Conservation Committee members to use as they check the Bluebird boxes in Country Park. He also leads the “litter patrol” twice a year.

Education Committee: Emily Tyler.

Emily has been a devoted member for many years. She is a tireless worker whom you will see at various locations directing the set-up and manning of the Club's displays for educational functions throughout Greensboro.

Finance: Judi Durr. Judi is remarkably talented, knowledgeable, and has an undying devotion to bird watching. She has aptly directed the finance committee in developing a yearly budget, a yearly audit and the allocation of excess funds to conservation projects throughout the state.

Membership: Jean Murdick. Making new members feel welcome is Jean's task. As if this isn't enough, she is involved with T-shirt sales which serve as fund raisers. A woman with remarkable powers, Jean is in control of the batch email system that emails items to all the club members who have an email address.

Yearbook/Newsletter/Website: Louise Brown. What can you say? Louise is a dedicated member with a knack for the “electronic.” The volume of work that she produces makes you wonder if she has a life. Her work is the life-blood of the Piedmont Bird Club.

Nominating Committee: Sally Howell. Quiet and unassuming, Sally continues to serve the Club as she tries to identify members who will serve as Officers of the Club. This is no small task as she and her committee wrack their brains every February to come up with a slate of Officers.

-- see Perch, cont' on p. 3

Shorebirds Field Trip

8/4/07

By Elizabeth Link

On Saturday, August 4, an intrepid group of 14 PBC birders turned out for a sweat-drenched trip around the Greensboro lakes to look for migrating shorebirds. While recent rains had raised the lake levels somewhat, we still managed to find enough birds, butterflies, and wildflowers to make us forget the heat for a while. The total number of bird species seen was 32. We ended the trip with some great looks at the Mississippi Kites that were in the same general area off Kemp Road North where they were first discovered in 2004. We were surprised to see the kites join some noisy crows in mobbing a Red-tailed Hawk soaring overhead.

Other interesting migrants included: Great Egret, White Ibis, Solitary, Spotted, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers, Chimney Swifts, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great-crested Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-eyed Vireo, and Barn Swallows. Although an uncommon year-round resident, the Red-headed Woodpecker, seen in the Plainfield Marsh, is always a delight to see. The trails along Lake Townsend we birded were the Reedy Fork Trail and the West House Trail which is north of the Lake Jeanette spillway (access from Church Street).



Honorary Membership

At its July meeting, The Executive Board voted unanimously to approve **Hal Strickland** as an Honorary Member. Hal has been an active member of the Club since joining more than twenty years ago. He has participated on walks, attended programs and social events, served on the Finance Committee and for many years covered a territory for the Christmas and Spring Bird Counts.

In the fall of 1990, Hal and his wife Fran hosted the Club for a field trip to their place in the Virginia Mountains near Mabry Mill, which concluded with a delightful lunch. Fran sent many of us home with cucumbers from her garden.



Spring Count May 5, 2007

by Louise Brown

The Spring Bird Count helps provide data for the Carolina Bird Club. There were 29 participants in our count circle this year, mostly PBC members. On Count Day, the weather was very good this year, almost perfect, sunny, not too hot, not too cold, and a little breezy. Herb Hendrickson has compiled that data for our circle. Too lengthy for this newsletter, the entire list of birds and numbers can be seen on our website at piedmontbirdclub.org/sbc2007.

In short, we saw a total of 139 species of birds (including four species not seen on Count Day but during that week: Common Raven, Nashville Warbler, Cape May Warbler, and Hermit Thrush.)

Species worth noting included: Northern Bobwhite, Broad-winged Hawk, Bank Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Veery, Cerulean Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow. The number of individuals was 8066.

Top 10 Most Plentiful Species:

Canada Goose	598
American Robin	468
European Starling	453
Common Grackle	412
Chimney Swift	411
Northern Cardinal	383
American Goldfinch	272
Cedar Waxwing	267
American Crow	222
Mourning Dove	217



-- *Perch, cont' from p. 2*

Social Committee: Clare McSwain.

Clare is not a fun-loving socialite, but someone who can get a job done. Her mission is to make your experience at the Fall and Spring picnics and the Holiday dinner enjoyable. She has some outstanding plans for the 2007 – 2008 year.

Telephone Committee: Joyce Bartlett.

Joyce is in charge of a very valuable component of the Piedmont Bird Club. Her devotion to this committee and to contacting members is vital to member participation in the Club.



FALL PICNIC



Saturday, September 8 at Hagan-Stone Park, Shelter #6. Nature walk 5:30 p.m.; picnic 6:00 p.m. Bring a covered dish; beverages will be provided.

The potluck (covered dish) dinner will begin at 6:00. Bring whatever inspires you of the four main food groups: meats, vegetables, breads or desserts; we are trusting chance that we will get a good mix of food! The PBC will provide beverages - soft drinks, iced tea, water, and paper and plastic ware. So, bring some food, bring your binoculars, bring a hearty appetite and be prepared to have a good time!

Coordinators: Clare and Mike McSwain: 282-2834; velvetcrush@triad.rr.com

Directions to Hagan-Stone Park:

Take 421 South from Greensboro. Drive to the stoplight at Hagan-Stone Park Road. (There are signs, but the sign to Forest Oaks is more prominent.) Turn right and go a couple of miles to the park entrance on the right. There are signs in the park to guide you to the shelter.

If you need a ride to the picnic

(or if you are willing to be a driver), please contact

Jean Murdick: 852-3952,

lonandjean@trisad.rr.com

and she will try to make the arrangements

If you have any birdy items you'd like to donate for door prizes or table favors

at the Holiday Dinner, please contact

Clare McSwain, Social Committee

Chair; 282-2834, velvetcrush@triad.rr.com

- *Summit, cont' from p. 1*

right in front of you and you don't see them, then you do. Every so often as they move slowly and methodically through the marsh, that long neck extends fully, grabbing a crayfish delicacy. Adding these new species to the day's total, the number of species was 45 plus an unidentified accipiter sp.



Observe Migrating Hawks

By Dan Chambers

It is that time of year when the movement of raptors to their winter homes can be observed. Just like Christmas and Spring Bird Counts, Great Backyard Bird Count and Breeding Bird Surveys, the collection of data on these migrating raptors is an important conservation measure. Approximately 20 PBC members participated as official observers in September 2006. There were over 4,800 raptors observed including Peregrine Falcons, Merlins, American Kestrels, Northern Harriers, Ospreys, Bald Eagles, hawks, accipiters and vultures. One highlight was viewing a kettle of 1500 Broad-winged Hawks.

Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch 2007 will be held again this year from September 15-30. Organized by the Audubon Society of Forsyth County, the scheduled observation hours are from 10-6. Contact John Haire, johnhaire@starpower.net, 671-5577, or Phil Dickinson, pdickins@triad.rr.com, 659-2464, for more details and to sign up for the days and times you can help.

-- *Rand. Co., cont' from p. 1*

Other spring migrants included White-eyed, Blue-headed, Yellow-throated, and Red-eyed Vireos; Rose-breasted and Blue Grosbeaks, Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, Great-crested Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Swainson's Thrush. Those who stayed until after dark were treated to the calls of Whip-poor-wills. The final tally was 66 species. This number was down a little from last year, several birds had not yet arrived. Cold snaps in mid-April had put quite a number of plants and animals up to a month behind schedule.

Mark, who is a keeper at the NC Zoo, specializing in reptiles, added another dimension by discovering and sharing a Green Snake and a Worm Snake along the way. He also had captured two Corn Snakes and an Eastern Kingsnake the day before, so we got to look at, handle, and photograph them. (They were released afterwards.)

We also enjoyed a number of wildflowers, including Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Wood Sorrel, May Apple and various ferns. People had brought a variety of dishes and foods so we shared a wonderful potluck lunch. Great people, great food, great birds! It can't get any better than that!



Country Park Bird Boxes Spring 2007

By Paul Morien

We officially started monitoring the bird boxes on March 19, 2007.

In 2006 we were monitoring 11 bird boxes. By April 9th we had relocated several boxes, repaired others and added 6 new boxes. This year we will monitor a total of 17 boxes.

The first nest was made by Brown-headed Nuthatches on March 19th. By March 30th, the Bluebirds and Carolina Chickadees had started their nests. The House Wrens started at the end of April and were in two boxes (one real nest and one dummy).

On May 7th, the following nests were active:

- 6 Eastern Bluebird – total of six eggs and twenty young birds
- 2 Carolina Chickadees
- 1 House Wren

The Brown-headed Nuthatches successfully had seven fledging and the Carolina Chickadees had five. Within the next two weeks many of the young bluebirds fledged.

Country Park is full of different types of birds at this time of year. My most recent trips have provided the following sightings: Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Baltimore Oriole, Cedar Waxwing, Gray Catbird, Yellow-rumped, Black-and-white, and Pine Warblers, and Cooper's Hawk. These are in addition to the year-round residents at the Park.

On May 7th, I was lucky enough to be within 15 yards of a Red-shouldered Hawk, which was sitting on top of box #6 containing five young bluebirds. When he moved, prompted by two crows, the bluebird parents immediately returned and fed their young. It was quite a sight.

Try birding at Country Park - you might be surprised by what you see.



FROM THE PBC ARCHIVES

By Susan Weimer, *History and Archives Chair*

Excerpt from a presentation to Piedmont Bird Club of Greensboro, North Carolina, February 17, 1983 entitled "The Birds and I" by Etta Schiffman

[THE] HUMMING BIRD

I was living downtown in my old home on Washington Street. We had had a rather long dry spell one summer and the dust had discolored the white painted walls quite badly on the east side of the house. I was trying to wash off some of the dust with a strong stream of water from the garden hose when a female hummingbird came flying, probably attracted by the sound of the water. First she flew into the drops that were bouncing off the wall, then tried to get into the thin jet of water shooting out from the base of the nozzle, right at my hand. So I turned on the fine spray which gave the little lady a chance to fly back and forth through the spray, which she did – then perched on a nearby bush and preened her feathers before flying away. The scene was enhanced by a rainbow created by the sun shining on the spray. A footnote to this charming picture: I could hardly wait to describe this incident to the Bird Club at its next meeting. It never occurred to me that anyone would question my veracity. But sometime later, I don't remember just when; probably the following spring, I had a phone call from Eve Craft, whom I am sure most of you remember. At that time she was living out on Lawndale Drive where there is now a Baptist Church. She said she owed me an apology, that when I reported the Hummingbird incident she thought it was a wild story that I had made up. But now she had just had a similar experience, and knew how thrilling it was. I have had the same thing happen again in my yard on Bluemont.

New Logo

Hey, did you notice that lively wren singing its heart out on the banner of this newsletter? That's our new logo! The Executive Board of the Piedmont Bird Club thought it was important, after sixty-nine years without one, to have a recognizable symbol to identify and promote our club in the community. An ad hoc Logo Committee, formed last fall, has been working long and diligently to develop the design. Starting with a photograph, the image went through a series of metamorphoses to become the simple, eye-catching symbol that will hereinafter represent the Piedmont Bird Club.

In addition to the newsletter, the logo will grace our website, letterhead, note cards, return address labels and educational posters, and in the future will also appear on t-shirts, caps, bumper stickers – you name it.

Thanks to the members of the Logo Committee - Diana Bowman, Louise Brown, Beth Bursuck, Janet Morien, Jean Murdick, and Melissa Whitmire - for the many, many hours dedicated to this project, and kudos for a job well done.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Photo © Lou Skrabec



1589-134 Skeet Club Road
High Point, NC 27265
841-2572

433 Pisgah Church Road
Greensboro, NC 27455
282-4458

PBC members get a 10% discount
on all regularly priced items in the
store - mention your membership
BEFORE you make a purchase!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We look forward to sharing our upcoming activities with these newest new members! Since you will be receiving your new Yearbook soon (first available at the Fall Picnic), the addresses and other information are not included in this newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

Black, Nathan

Kilpatrick, Sharon & Gary

Meagher, Laura & Don Wolcott

Post, Sandy

Pretzsch, David, Nell, & Eric

Spence, Lauren

Smith, Diane M.

RETURNING MEMBER

Carroll, Kay C.



Calendar

September 28-30

CBC Meeting: Santee, SC. Join birders from both Carolinas for evening programs and day trips along the coast of southern SC and northern GA. See the CBC website for complete information:

<http://www.carolinabirdclub.org>

Saturday, October 6

Field Trip: Potluck #1. On this trip we will range farther afield in search of fall migrants. Emphasis will be on tracking down any reported local rarities or visiting well-known hawk watch sites in the nearby VA mountains. Bring food and drink for lunch, a chair for use while hawk watching, and a rain/wind breaker. If you have a scope, consider bringing it. We will carpool from St. Francis Episcopal Church parking lot (3506 Lawndale Drive) at 7:00 a.m. Leader: George Wheaton, 336-540-8953(h), 336-392-3652(c), gcwheaton@earthlink.net

Saturday, October 13

Fall Festival: Bur-Mil Park Wildlife Education Center, 10:00-3:00. Over 2000 people attended last year's Fall Festival at Bur-Mil Park to participate in a variety of activities which included 27 vendors or exhibitors and hayrides and other fun things for children. If you would like to help with the PBC exhibit please contact Emily Tyler 375-5770, ettyler@triad.rr.com

Thursday, October 18

Meeting: Recovery Program for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, by Susan Ladd Miller. She is a field biologist who has been involved with monitoring Red-cockaded Woodpeckers in North Carolina for fifteen years. Eight of these years have been with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This has involved the preservation and growth of habitat for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker in NC's Fort Bragg-Sandhills area. She also is active in The Safe Harbor Program which encourages landowners to enhance and restore habitat for endangered species.

Bird of the Season: Sharp-shinned Hawk

Saturday, October 20

Field Trip: The Summit Conference Center at Haw River State Park. We will walk the wooded trails down to the lake and along the boardwalk to the Haw River, which, at this location, is a small stream. Joint trip with TGP Audubon to explore the trails prior to their hosting the state Audubon meeting here in May 2008. Leader: Sue Cole, 854-3346, sclyle65@netscape.com

Saturday, November 3

Adopt-a-Park: Members will improve the environment by picking up trash at Greensboro Country Park. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot that can be reached by turning onto Orman Road from Lawndale, and then turning left at the intersection. (Rain date: Nov. 4 at 2:30 pm) Leader: Cal Weimer. 288-2160, cweimer@triad.rr.com

Saturday, November 10

Field Trip: Bird walk at the Bog Garden. Meet at the garden at 8:30 a.m. To date, our club has identified 126 species at this great little wetland. Leader: Louise Brown, 685-5043, piedmont-birder@triad.rr.com



Red-headed Woodpecker
Photo © by Melissa Whitmire

PBC's Oldest Living Member: Sidney Holmes

She has been an honorary member for some time, but has been in a nursing home in Lake Toxaway for a number of years. Emily Tyler was curious to know if she was even still alive. We had been sending her newsletters and such, and none had been returned. There is no phone number for her in our membership information. Jean Murdick did a little research on the Internet, and discovered that not only is she still alive, she is 100 years old!



PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Individual (\$15.00)___ Family (\$20.00)___ New___ Renewal___

Our fiscal year is from June 1st to May 31st. Mail payment to:

PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB - PO Box 38833 - Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

Calendar

Reminder: If you are interested in going on a field trip, always contact the trip leader prior to the trip. That way you will be informed of last minute changes or cancellations, or the leader may need to modify plans according to the number of attendees.

Programs (unless otherwise noted) are at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month, October -- April, at the **Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library**, 1420 Price Park Road, Greensboro



This year we are introducing a new kind of trip: **Potluck**. These are spur-of-the-moment trips with no previously set destination. It will be more important than ever to contact the trip leader in advance to express your interest in participating so you may be informed of the exact itinerary and meeting place.



Saturday, September 8

FALL PICNIC. Hagan-Stone Park, Shelter #6. Nature walk 5:30 p.m.; picnic 6:00 p.m. Bring a covered dish; beverages will be provided. Coordinator: Clare McSwain, 282-2834, velvetcrush@triad.rr.com

September 15

Big Sweep. Each fall, volunteers clean litter from our community's lakes, creeks and streams as part of the NC Big Sweep Waterway Litter Pickup. Thousands of volunteers from various community organizations take part in the cleanup, showing our community's concern for cleaner waterways. TGP Audubon will coordinate a cleanup of an area stream. Leaders: Mary and Terry Woodrow, 316-1339, mandrwoodrow@aol.com

September 15 – 30

Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch. Organized by the Audubon Society of Forsyth County, scheduled observation hours are from 10-6. Contact John Haire, johnhaire@starpower.net, 671-5577 or Phil Dickinson, pdickins@triad.rr.com, 659-2464 for more details and sign up for the days and times you can help.

Saturday, September 22

Field Trip: Pilot Mountain Hawk Watching. We will visit Pilot Mountain State Park, 45 minutes away, the best spot in the Piedmont to observe fall hawk migration. We'll also look for warblers on nearby trails. Meet at the Little Pinnacle parking lot at 9:00. Bring lunch. Call or email if you need directions or want to carpool. This is a joint trip with TGP Audubon. Leader: Gregg Morris, 883-3270, gregg.morris@highpointnc.gov

Saturday, September 29

Field Trip: Fall Migrants: (Bog Garden & Hamilton Lakes.) These local parks in residential sections of Greensboro have become hot spots in the county for neotropical migrants. Leaders: Henry & Elizabeth Link, 273-4672, baddogi@yahoo.com, linkh@bellsouth.net

-see Calendar, con't on p. 5



Piedmont Bird Club
PO Box 38833
Greensboro, NC 27438-8833

Label here



DON'T FORGET!!!
FALL PICNIC
SATURDAY September 8th 5:30 PM
HAGAN-STONE PARK, SHELTER #6
BRING A COVERED DISH!

More details page 3