



Roger Tory Peterson  
American Avocet



# The Piedmont Birder



Roger Tory Peterson  
White Pelican



Roger Tory Peterson  
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

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Newsletter of the  
**Piedmont Bird Club**  
PO Box 38833  
Greensboro, NC 27438-8833  
www.greensboro.com/birdclub  
Editor: Louise Brown

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The next deadline for newsletter items is Apr. 15, 2004. I prefer to include a phone # and/or e-mail address for leaders and coordinators of any events. Please let me know if this is unsatisfactory. Call Louise Brown at 274-3691 or E-mail at piedmontbirder@aol.com.

## Officers

<b>President:</b>	Emily Tyler
<b>Vice President:</b>	Bob Pellettier
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Carol Pellettier
<b>Corresponding Secretary:</b>	Helen Black
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Susan Weimer
<b>Members-at-Large:</b>	Jane Lewis Judie Underkoffler

## PBC Thanksgiving Trip

11/27-30/03

by Carolyn Allen

Like birds that take their cues from the weather, members of the Piedmont Bird Club proved that flexibility in travel plans can pay off – in this case, rewarding us with several spectacular sightings during our Thanksgiving trip.

Uncertainties with the weather suggested that it would be better to bird Pea Island than to move inland to the Alligator River NWR or Lake Mattamuskeet on Thursday. The morning produced a fair list of birds, the most exciting of which was a peregrine falcon that languished on a roadside utility pole long enough for most of our group to get a good look at it.

An incident that none of us had ever observed involved a great black-backed gull attacking a ruddy duck, killing it, and proceeding to have lunch. We concluded that the ruddy must have been sick or injured or this form of death would not have happened. We identified 12 species of ducks and, in addition to noting dozens of tundra swans, some sharp eyes in the group saw that we had three mute swans as well. One of the more interesting processions of birds was American avocets, estimated to be upwards of 100. They were lined up in military fashion, in two staggered rows, with a snowy egret midway in the procession and a great egret bringing up the rear. While we watched the avocets,

*-Thanksgiving, con't page 3*

## Bog Garden

Nov. 15, 2003

A nice group of PBC members turned out for this walk, including a couple of newer members coming on a field trip for the first time as well as some of us old-timers.

A drizzly day, the rain actually held off till about 11:00. The birds were not deterred, however, and were quite active. The underbrush was thick with White-throated Sparrows, many of which were singing their lovely song profusely. Flocks of Goldfinches in their subdued winter plumage were feeding on the seed heads of various plants. Yellow-rumped Warblers were feeding on insects in trees and bushes near the water, joined by at least one Phoebe, which called attention to itself by saying its name over and over. Our "Best Bird" species of the day was Purple Finch- at least one male and at least one female were feeding in the trees over the sidewalk near the beginning of the Nell Lewis Trail. That was a hot spot of activity: Cardinals, Towhees, WT Sparrows and other birds were singing and feeding, quite undeterred by the light sprinkles of rain.

We saw four Sapsuckers during our 3-hour tour. We also saw several Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and heard at least one Flicker. We heard and managed to see both Brown-headed and White-breasted Nuthatches, especially in the trees above the lake in the strip of woods bordering Northline Ave. Two Great Blue Herons impressed us as they flew across the lake.

*-Bog, con't page 3*

**From the  
President's Perch  
by Emily Tyler**

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a report by Carolyn Allen on the highlights of the Club's Thanksgiving trip to the Outer Banks and Lake Mattamuskeet area. There were eight Club members who participated for three or four days and two more who joined us for one day. Despite occasional rain, cool temperatures and stiff winds, the trip was very productive with more than 100 species logged by the group over the long weekend. Several members saw life birds and several others saw greater numbers of certain species than they had seen in all their birding years combined, e.g., Merlins (5) and American Pipits. Also, most of us had never seen as many as a dozen Northern Harriers or sixteen White Pelicans or more than 100 American Avocets at one time. We are grateful to Dennis and Lynn Burnette for leading us on yet another outstanding trip. Not only did we find the birds but also some great places to eat seafood!

PBC members were well represented at the memorial service for Darl Tipton held at St. Andrews Episcopal Church on January 9. Except for the last six months of his life, he had enjoyed remarkably good health during his 92 years. His daughter, Kathy Gingras, shared wonderful memories of Darl in the eulogy she presented. Darl and Joan, Kathy's mother who died in 1995, were loyal and dedicated members of the Club for many years. Darl served as treasurer for several terms and Joan coordinated our gala celebration at the time of our 50th anniversary in 1988.

As you know if you read this column regularly, I enjoy the snow and ice events which bring in a greater variety of birds to my feeders, yard and adjoining lake. The latest such occasion resulted in 23 species on January 9 and 24 on the next day. Most notable were Purple Finches, Pine Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Fox Sparrows and both Song and Field Sparrows which are not regular visitors. I watch patiently for the return of the Brown Creeper which appeared almost daily for several weeks last winter. (Yeah! 1<sup>st</sup> sighting 1-24)

Taffy London called to report a hummingbird at her feeder in mid-December. I contacted Susan Campbell who made a visit to the London's and was amazed to

**-Perch, con't on 3<sup>rd</sup> column this page**



Roger Tory Peterson  
Red-breasted Nuthatch

**Blue Ridge Parkway  
by Dennis Burnette**

Although the day started with overcast skies in the Piedmont, the Blue Ridge Parkway was beautiful, cool, and sunny most of the day for our annual birding and fall leaves trip on Saturday, Oct. 25. We entered the Parkway at Fancy Gap north of Winston-Salem and followed it south all the way to the intersection with US 421 which we used as our route home. Along the way we paused many times for birding, including a stop for a great picnic at Doughton State Park.

The highlight of the trip was our excellent views of both Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches in the same trees. We watched as several birds of each species gleaned seeds from White Pine cones and then carefully hid them in the bark of several nearby oaks and hickories. The Red-breasted Nuthatch was a life bird for one of our members, and it is a species that is seldom seen by most of the rest of us. Also working in the underbrush and low limbs of the same area were small flocks of Yellow-rumped Warblers and White-throated Sparrows, and a single Ruby-crowned Kinglet.

The leaves were still sticking to the trees at the lower elevations with the colors tending more toward yellow and gold with orange and red punctuations than in recent years. Overall, the colors were more subtle this year. A surprising number of trees were still mostly green for so late in the month. At the higher elevations, the recent high wind had done its work and left more than 50% of the tree limbs bare. We heard several Common Ravens calling in the heights, but got a good look at only one.

**-Blue Ridge, con't on page 3**



Roger Tory Peterson  
Long-tailed Duck

**Alamance County**

Dec 6, 2003

by Judi Durr, Lynn Moseley

Lynn Moseley led the trip to selected spots in Alamance County, Cedarrock Park and Lake MacIntosh. The Club had tried to do a trip there last year, which was canceled due to the terrible ice storms, and weather very nearly threatened this one, but cleared up at the last moment.

The PBCers were joined by a birder from Spain who had contacted club members through the website and who identified a Long-tailed duck and Ruddy Ducks on Lake MacIntosh. Incidentally, his first name is Oriol and he is a very good birder!

Forty-one species were seen, including Purple Finch, Brown Creeper, Cedar Waxwing, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Black Vulture.

After the "official" end of the trip, Lynn Moseley and Henry Link returned to one of the overlooks at Lake MacIntosh, and were pleased to spot an adult Bald Eagle. Close examination of the bird through Henry's spotting scope revealed a few brown feathers in the head, indicating that the bird is about four and a half years old.



**-Perch, con't from 1<sup>st</sup> column this page** discover it was a juvenile male Ruby-throated Hummer which is seen much less often in the winter than the Rufous Hummingbird. Susan banded and released it. Taffy brought photos of the process to the January meeting to share. How tiny this little bird is! Despite the frigid temperatures we've had, the bird remains at Taffy's house, sipping sugar water and feasting on insects in her yard.

I am pleased to announce that Dan Chambers has agreed to assume the role of chair of the Conservation Committee for the remainder of the year. As soon as the weather permits, Dan will be seeking volunteers to help clean out the Bluebird boxes at Country Park and, when spring arrives, clean up around the lakes. Carrying out the tasks associated with the Adopt-a-Park Project is particularly important to the Club as it earns us a free picnic shelter at Country Park for our Spring Picnic.

**-Perch, con't on page 3**

## EAGLE UPDATE



Yes, I do have eagle news! On Monday (Jan. 5), Carolyn Allen and I went out to Lake Brandt and confirmed the presence of two adult Bald Eagles and a "new-and-improved" nest! The nest is the same one they used last year (in a pine tree on the far side of the lake) but has been enlarged so that it is noticeably bigger now. No eggs have yet been laid; we're still about a month away from that event.

-Lynn Moseley



*-Blue Ridge from page 2*

On the way home we stopped at Dinkin's Bottom on the Yadkin River to see what birds had arrived. This is the site of a field trip planned for January to look for five sparrow species. (Ed. note: trip cancelled due to environmental disturbance.) We didn't see very many birds, but we had a nice number of butterflies on the fall wildflowers. We then made a detour to nearby West Bend Vineyards for a bit of wine tasting. Several bottles of wine were seen leaving the place in the hands of some of our birders. Do we know how to have a good time birding, or what?



*-Bog, con't from page 1*

There were about a dozen Northern Shovelers, and also several Ring-necked Ducks. Both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets were spotted, very active among the trees.

-Louise Brown



*-Thanksgiving, con't from page 1*

someone noticed white pelicans in the distance. As we watched, a flight of 16 birds took wing and came toward us. We had a splendid opportunity to observe these birds, so unusual for our part of the Atlantic coast.

In the afternoon we birded several locations including Nags Head Woods and the south end of Jockey's Ridge State Park. With a mix of drizzle and light rain, the bird population was mostly under cover. Nags Head Woods is a lovely location protected by the Nature Conservancy and maintained by volunteers. Though bird life was not abundant, it was pleasant to walk the trail near the visitor center. The stop at the south end of Jockey's Ridge, which is an access point for the sound, offered up two merlin, at least one of which several of us studied through scopes.

We spent Friday at the Alligator River NWR, a very bird-productive site, where we saw more harriers on the wing in one relatively small area than most of us had ever seen. One guess as to numbers was 12, but other, larger, figures were not without basis. In addition, the wet field edges yielded yellow legs, lesser and greater, a kingfisher, a variety of small birds, and a few butterflies. An important addition was a flock of 40 to 50 pipits that obligingly were feeding in a field near the spot where we stopped to eat lunch. These birds are amazing disappearance artists! Now you see them and then you don't. A furrow in the field, a clump of grass and the enigmatic coloration come close to making them invisible. There were bear signs, and a mix of other birds: a kestrel, phoebe, cowbirds and redwings, turkey vultures, chickadees, wrens and red-tails, both adults and immatures.

In the afternoon we explored some locations we had not previously visited. With the stout west wind, the birding conditions were difficult, but we had a grand opportunity to observe an osprey perched about 30 yards from the road.

We spent Saturday at Lake Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, about an hour's drive from Manteo, headquarters for the weekend. In the afternoon, Dennis had arranged for one of the rangers to take us into the Gull Rock Game Land and, later, into ponds ordinarily

*-Thanksgiving, con't next column*

*-Thanksgiving, con't from last column*

closed to the public to look for ducks. There, we found an astonishing number of green-winged teal. And we had no shortage of other water/wading birds, including blue-winged teal, the only place we saw them during the weekend.

Before heading home on Sunday, most of the group visited the area around the Bodie Island Lighthouse, including the adjoining beach where we picked up northern gannets and new shorebirds and gulls for the trip list. All total, the list numbered about 100 species.



*-Perch, con't from page 2*

Please let Dan know if you are willing to join his committee. Phone: 286-9735 Thanks, Dan!

We extend our sympathy to Dane Hill whose father, Arnold William Hill, of Walnut Cove, died January 8 at the Stokes Reynolds Memorial Hospital at age 78.



### NEED A RIDE?

If you are missing out on PBC meetings because you no longer drive or no longer drive at night, check out the following list. These PBC Members have indicated that they would be happy to provide a ride to club functions that they are attending. Look for a driver who lives near you and give her/him a call to make arrangements.

Ann Walter-Fromson 27408 - the Green Valley neighborhood

Jean Murdick 27408 - the Green Valley neighborhood (I don't mind going out of my way if you don't live close.)

Mary Hess 27405 - the Aycock Historic District

Judie Underkoffler 27301 - McLeansville

Dierdre Poe 27410 - off Fleming Rd.

Susan & Cal Weimer 27455 - Lawndale Dr., Country Park area

If you would like to add your name to the list of volunteer drivers, please contact Jean Murdick.

**Phone: 852-3952**

**E-mail: lonandjean@triad.rr.com**

-Calendar, cont' from p 5

**Saturday, March 20**

• **FIELD TRIP:** We will visit the Whitacre's farm in the Bunch Rd. area of Guilford Co. for an easy walk to look for late winter birds. If time allows, we also may visit one of the lakes to look for waterfowl. Leaders: Carolyn and Don Allen. Ph: 288-3045 E-mail: texallennc@aol.com

**Saturday, March 27**

• **Adopt-a-Park,** 9:00 a.m. (Rain date Sunday, March 28 at 2:00 p.m.) We'll pick up trash around Greensboro Country Park on Lawndale Drive and check the bluebird houses to get them ready for their spring occupants. Coordinator: Dan Chambers. Phone: 286-9735 E-mail: Instructus@aol.com

**Saturday, April 3**

• **FIELD TRIP: Weymouth Woods.** We will travel about two hours to the Southern Pines area in search of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. For those who wish to do so, we will stay in the nature preserve late into the evening, spend the night in a nearby motel, and get back to the preserve somewhat early to try to see the woodpeckers coming and going from their nest trees or check local areas for migrants. Leader: Louise Brown. Ph: 274-3691 E-mail: piedmontbirder@aol.com

**Friday-Sunday, April 9-11 (Easter Holiday Weekend)**

• **FIELD TRIP: Morehead City/Beaufort, NC.** Leaders: Dennis and Lynn Burnette. Phone: 299-4342 E-mail: burneted@aol.com

**Thursday, April 15**

• **MEETING: Bird Banding Why's and How's,** Tom Mowbray. Tom is a Forsyth County bird bander who will describe the techniques and equipment used to band birds and explain the kinds of scientific contributions that have been possible only as a result of banding birds. He will follow with a demonstration on Sat., April 17.

**Bird of the Season:** Chipping Sparrow - Rob Rachlin

**Saturday, April 17**

• **FIELD TRIP: Bird Banding.** Tom Mowbray will demonstrate bird banding, at a time and location to be announced at Thursday's meeting.

**Saturday, April 24**

• **FIELD TRIP: Rural Randolph Co.,** home of member Jane Lewis, for breeding birds of the Piedmont. Call for directions. Leader: Jane Lewis. Ph: 381.1696 e-mail jlewis@rtmc.net

-continued next column

**Welcome new members**

Be sure to add these names and changes to your yearbook! (Greensboro addresses and area codes unless otherwise noted.)

- Chambers, Dan**
- McBride, Ella**
- Perini, Anna & Norman, Vello**
- Robertson, Kay**
- Sheldon, James & Audrey**
- Ward, Jim & Frances**

**WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED**

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!

-Calendar from previous column

**Saturday, May 1**

• **SPRING BIRD COUNT.** Novices are welcome for all or part of the day to count within the designated 15-mile circle. Birding is mostly by car and short hikes. The tally is the next day at 2 p.m at St. Andrews Episcopal Church. Assignments Coordinator: Elizabeth Link; Ph: 273-4672 E-mail: baddogi@yahoo.com  
Compiler: Don Allen; Computer Recorder: Lynn Moseley.



If you know anyone in the club who is sick or just under the weather, please contact Lynn Burnette at 299-4342 or mlburnette@aol.com. She will send a card on behalf of the PBC.



**Volunteer Opportunity**

Have you ever fed a baby bird? Whether you have or you haven't, if you can spare any time at all during the busy upcoming nesting season, the Wildlife Rehab Center in Asheboro needs you! No experience needed! If you would like to help us return our injured and orphaned wildlife to their homes, please contact **Jane Lewis (work 336.424.6329, home 336.381.1696, e-mail jlewis@rtmc.net)** for more information.

**News of Members**

Best wishes for recovery go to Helen Black who is back in Cone Hospital again the week of January 19 after a few days at home. She was injured when her car was totaled just before Thanksgiving. Cards and short visits would help raise her spirits.

**It's not too late!  
for  
MEMBERSHIP  
RENEWAL**

There are a few folks who have not paid their dues for the 2003-2004 season. If you are not sure who you are, call Susan Weimer at 288-2160 or e-mail her at: sweimer@triad.rr.com. Half price now. Use the application form below.

**PIEDMONT BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Individual \_\_\_ Family \_\_\_

New \_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_

Note: One year's dues are payable from May through April, \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families. Half price now. Mail Payment to: PBC, Box 38833, Greensboro, 27438-8833

# Calendar

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

## Saturday, February 14

• **FIELD TRIP: Waterfowl on the Greensboro Lakes.** Meet at 9:00 a.m. Ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, and gulls are our target birds on this tour of the lake overlooks. Dress warmly and bring a thermos of something hot; the wind off the lakes can be chilling. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. No walking. Leader: Dennis Burnette. Phone: 299-4342 E-mail: burnetted@aol.com

## Thursday, February 19, 7:30 p.m.

• **MEETING: The National Wildlife Refuge System: The First 100 Years,** J. D. Bricken  
J. D. is the Manager of the Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge, which our club has visited several times in recent years. He will describe the refuge system in this centennial year, and explain methods used to manage habitat for birds on the refuges.

**Bird of the Season:** White-throated Sparrow - Louise Brown

## Saturday, February 28

• **FIELD TRIP: Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge** near Charlotte. We will drive south about an hour and 45 minutes to Pee Dee NWR. On past trips we have seen a good selection of waterfowl, huge congregations of herons, most of the woodpecker species, as well as typical Piedmont winter resident birds. Meet at Congregational United Church of Christ at 8:00 a.m. to car pool. Leader: Phillip Kellam. Phone: 275-3692

## Saturday, March 6

• **FIELD TRIP: A&T Farm.** Meet at the Farm at 8:30 a.m. Easy hike around a farm pond and along the edge of wet woodland. Always a good trip, this is our best site for Common Snipe. Wear water-resistant footwear, dress in layers. Leader: Emily Tyler. Phone: 375-5770 E-mail: ettyler@triad.rr.com

## Thursday, March 18, 7:30 p.m.

• **MEETING: North Carolina's Natural Areas: The Nature Conservancy in North Carolina,** Merrill Lynch  
Merrill is the Assistant Director for Protection of the North Carolina Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. He has been with TNC for 20 years, is a lifelong resident of North Carolina and has a lifelong interest in birds. His talk will focus on a mountains-to-the-sea summary of protected areas in our state, including such well-known Nature Conservancy sites as Nags Head Woods, Green Swamp, and Bluff Mountain. He will take an ecological approach and describe not only the birds but also the important features of the ecology and natural history of each area.

**Bird of the Season:** Song Sparrow – Phillip Kellam

-Calendar. con't on page 4



## Piedmont Bird Club

PO Box 38833

Greensboro, NC 27438-8833