

# New Hope Audubon Society Newsletter

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P.O. Box 2693, Chapel Hill, NC 27515  
<http://www.newhopeaudubon.org>



## Searching The Boneyards by Norm Budnitz

The following poem describes birding in Gambell, Alaska. The events related below were described in detail in a previous, more serious article, *Confessions of a Lister*, which you can read in our Summer, 2012, newsletter:

<http://www.newhopeaudubon.org/newsletter/NHASNL20120607.pdf>

[The author offers his sincere apologies to Robert W. Service and his poem, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*. Some words are in **boldface** to aid the reader in scanning the rhymes.]

There are strange things **done** under the Alaskan **sun** by the people who keep lists of birds.

The birding **trails** have their secret **tales** that would turn your blood to curds.  
The searching is **hard** in the Gambell **boneyard**, but the hardest I ever did see  
Was that day in the **fall** that hangs like a **pall** o'er the heads of us **all**, especially me.

Now Gambell is **gray** almost every **day**, on this island in the Bering Sea.

The winds can **blow** or it can **snow** almost any time upon you or me.

Snow feels **sweet** compared to **sleet**, but both are just as cold.

For when the weather **comes**, it may sound like **drums** and make your bones feel old.

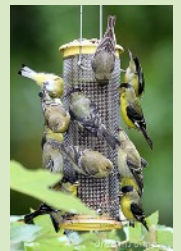
The native **blokes**, the Yupik **folks**, have lived here for thousands of years.

Hunting and **fishing**, searching and **gath'ring**, at least, so it appears.

Carcasses and **bones**, they have piled and **thrown** on heaps quite deep near the town

Called boneyards by **those** who tell of their **woes** in this land of wondrous renown.

## Feeder Watch



by Tom Driscoll

With this article, "Feeder Watch" begins its ninth year of discussing feeder birds. Although I discuss the birds I am seeing or you can see at your feeders, I am hoping to receive reports and questions about the birds you are seeing. This will make the articles more interesting. If you have ideas about topics to discuss, want to report on the birds you are seeing, or have questions about the birds you are seeing, please send me an email at [spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com](mailto:spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com).

The leaves are starting to fall which will make the birds easier to spot! The days are much shorter and the temperatures are colder; all these factors have made the birds feed more actively at my feeders. Our winter visitors, Dark-eyed Juncos, White-throated Sparrows,



Cont'd from pg 1 Searching the Boneyards

The hardy *Yupiks* with shovels and *sticks* dig in the 'yards for ivory and bone  
That their ancestors have *tossed* beyond memories now *lost* where the sun has rarely shown.  
Looking for *prizes* of whatever *sizes*, wherever they dig they make holes small and large  
Searching down to *dusk* for old walrus *tusk* to carve into figures for which they can charge  
Handsome *fees*, if you *please*, to the birders who *come*--who knows whence they're *from*.

With their bins and their *scopes*, and with their high *hopes*,  
The birders do *search* for birds that may *perch*  
In the holes dug so *deep* trying to *keep* out of the weather so bad.  
Dressed to stay *warm*, a phalanx they *form*, trying to *rouse* a bird like a *mouse*,  
Tiny and *brown*, or gray with a *crown*, if seen, they'll truly be glad.

Onward they *push* through the mud and the *slush*, hoping to *flush* an Eye-browed *Thrush*,  
A Dusky *Warbler*, or perhaps a Pipit (*Pechora*), a Bluethroat, a Brambling *or a*  
Rustic Bunting so *neat* will land at their *feet*, the bird quite *confused*, the birders *amused*.  
But mostly they *won't* see the bird or they *don't* see it well enough to count it.  
So they reform their *ranks* and try to give *thanks* for not falling into a bone pit.

'Twas on such a *day*, blust'ry and *gray*, we raised up a *specter* that any *collector*  
Would want on his *list* if he could but *persist* and catch it with his camera.  
But the little brown *job* was no more than a *blob*  
A will-o-the-*wisp* with no markings *crisp*, like so many other ephemera.

The bird, it would *jump*, then land in a *clump* of wormwood or under a bone.  
We'd move toward it *again*, we women and *men*, but wily it *was* and that brown ball of *fuzz*  
Would run through the *brush*, all in a *rush*, and leave us standing alone,  
Our hands in the *air*, full of *despair*, cuz the damned little thing had just flown.

On we would *trudge*, hoping to *budge* it into the *air*, but the bird didn't play *fair*  
For often it *flew*, where, none of us *knew*, for it seemed our *fate* to always be *late*  
And the more that we *sought* the more we saw *naught*,  
And the harder we *tried*, the more that we *cried* to each other in frustration and hate.

Cont'd pg 3



Continued from page 2

At the end of the **day**, we gathered to **say** what little we'd **seen** in hopes that we'd **been**  
Able to **gather** perhaps enough **data**, such that each tiny **bit**, like puzzle pieces might **fit**  
To give us **enough**, no matter how **rough**, to create a **picture** or make a **conjecture**  
So we could **decree** the brown wraith's **ID**, for that is the gist,  
Our reason for **being**, the need for our **seeing** this bird to add to our list.

The decision at **best** was that we'd failed in our **quest**  
That even all **together**, in that terrible **weather**,  
We could only **accumulate** enough to **speculate**  
For the data, you **see**, was not enough to **ID** that little brown **flea** with enough **certainty**.

We'd given all that we **had**, but we'd all go home **sad**.  
Though it seems quite **absurd**, the name of that **bird**  
Will never be **known**; and our lists had not **grown**.  
A very hard **day** in that land cold and **gray**,  
But onward we'll **go**, in the sleet and the **snow**,  
For we'll always **try**, and perhaps, by and **by**,  
Another will **fly** and next time we'll **cry**  
"We know that bird's **name**." For that is the **game**.

There are strange things **done** under the Alaskan **sun** by the people who keep lists of birds.  
The birding **trails** have their secret **tales** that would turn your blood to curds.  
The searching is **hard** in the Gambell **boneyard**, but the hardest I ever did see  
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## Would You Like to Volunteer?

If you might be interested in volunteering with us on our projects, activities, fund-raising, or anything else we do, we have a survey form for you to fill out that will inform us of your interests, special talents, contact information, etc. To go to our on-line survey, follow this link: <http://goo.gl/w7Z7Zi>.

Do good works, meet people, have fun. We want to hear from you.



## NHAS Membership Meeting Speakers for 2013 – 2014

Our membership meetings are held in the Visitor Education Center at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, 100 Old Mason Farm Road, Chapel Hill, on the first Thursday of every month (except June, July, and August). Everyone, including non-members, is welcome! See you at a meeting soon!

<b>Date / Time</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Topic</b>
November 7, 2013 7:00 pm	Natalie Ocampo-Penuela, Duke University	Birds of Columbia
December 5, 2013 7:00pm	Paul Taillie,UNC	Fire and Regional Bird Diversity
January 9, 2014 7:00pm (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday this month)	Norm Budnitz, NHAS	Birding Bhutan in the Himalayas
February 6, 2014 7:00pm	Jeff Phippen, Duke University	Butterflies of North Carolina
March 6, 2014 7:00pm	Ed Corey, NC State Parks	Dragonflies of North Carolina
April 3, 2014 7:00pm	Chris Hakkenberg, UNC	Tracking Forest Dynamics from Space
May 1, 2014 7:00pm	Mark Kosiewski, NHAS	NHAS Barn Owl Initiative



## Calendar of Activities



Saturday, November 2, **StreamWatch** with John Kent 9:00am

Thursday, November 7, **Membership Meeting**, NC Botanical Gardens, 7:00pm,  
Natalie Ocampo-Penuela, Duke University: "Birds of Columbia"

Thursday, December 5, **Membership Meeting**, NC Botanical Gardens, 7:00pm. Paul Tallie,  
UNC,: "Fire and Regional Bird Diversity".

Saturday December 7, **Stream Watch** with John Kent, 9:00am

### Feeder Watch by Tom Driscoll cont'd from page 1

Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and other migrants from the north may be starting to show up. Have you seen any winter migrants yet?

Our year-round residents that frequent feeders include Eastern Towhee, Brown Thrasher, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Blue Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Brown-headed Nuthatch. Can you recognize these birds? Of course, the Northern Cardinal, our state bird, is always quick to come to the feeders. I use tube feeders and platform feeders. Some of the birds are not as adept at dining from the tube feeders, so the platform is helpful for them. Sometimes, I also put millet on the ground for towhees and some of our winter sparrows. Also, during the winter, there are periods of no or little rain. Make sure your birds have a source of water.

At this time of year, many of the birds, especially Northern Cardinals, may appear scraggly as they are molting into their new plumage. This is a gradual process that may take several months. During the winter, the juvenile birds will molt into their adult plumage for spring.

We have several species, including Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, that regularly come to the suet feeders. Other woodpeckers, including the Pileated Woodpecker, and other residents, such as Eastern Bluebirds, Pine Warblers, and Brown Thrashers, may also eat suet. Some residents, such as American Robins and Eastern Bluebirds, eat berries from the Holly Bushes, Dogwood, and juniper or cedar trees in your yard. You may not be the only one watching the birds at your feeders. Hawks, such as Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, feed on small birds and may also be "feeding" at your feeders. Have you seen any smallish hawks?

Most of our Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have departed for warmer climes. However, keep your feeders up for another month or so because we sometimes have "western" hummingbirds, such as Rufous or Calliope Hummingbirds, spend the winter here. If you are still seeing a hummingbird, please let me know!



## New Hope Audubon Officers for 2013-2014

<b>President</b> .....	<b>Norm Budnitz</b>
<b>Vice President</b> .....	<b>Robert "Bo" Howes</b>
<b>Secretary</b> .....	<b>Pat Reid</b>
<b>Treasurer</b> .....	<b>Jill Paul</b>
<b>Director</b> .....	<b>John Kent</b>
<b>Director</b> .....	<b>Mark Kosiewski</b>
<b>Director</b> .....	<b>Robin Moran</b>

## *Committee Chairs and Special Projects*

<b>Bird Seed Sale</b> .....	<b>Mary George</b>
<b>Christmas &amp; Spring Bird Counts</b> .....	<b>Norm Budnitz</b>
<b>Conservation Chair</b> .....	<b>Mark Kosiewski</b>
<b>Eagle Count</b> .....	<b>Steve McMurray</b>
<b>Education Chair</b> .....	vacant
<b>Hospitality Co-Chairs</b> .....	<b>Jim and Mary George</b>
<b>Important Bird Area, Eno River</b> .....	<b>Tom Driscoll</b>
<b>Important Bird Area, Jordan Lake</b> ...	<b>Bo Howes</b>
<b>Membership Chair</b> .....	<b>Jim George</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b> .....	<b>Pat Reid</b>
<b>Program Chair</b> .....	<b>Mark Kosiewski</b>
<b>Publicity Chair</b> .....	<b>Tom Driscoll</b>
<b>Stream Watch</b> .....	<b>John Kent</b>
<b>Webmaster</b> .....	<b>Norm Budnitz</b>
<b>Wildathon Chair</b> .....	vacant
<b>Wildlife Observation Platform</b> .....	<b>Bo Howes</b>