

New Hope Audubon Society Newsletter

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



My Two Cents Worth

by Tom Driscoll

Hi All. Our new year (September through May) is starting soon with lots of exciting projects, membership meetings, bird walks, and other events in store, but I am reflecting on the productive year we just finished! In the summer of every year, the New Hope Audubon Society (NHAS) board of directors (Board) holds a planning meeting. Besides planning for the upcoming year, we talk about what we've accomplished in the past year. Here are a few of the highlights from the past year:

- Hosting great membership meeting speakers and topics
- Conducting monthly bird walks
- Conducting monthly Streamwatch (monitoring water quality at New Hope Creek in 5 spots)
- Launching our Education Committee and development of a children's program
- Establishing a Bird Friendly Community subcommittee and developing brochures, native plantings, and development of a yard certification program
- Conducting Christmas and spring bird counts, breeding bird surveys, and our quarterly Jordan Lake Eagle counts
- Hosting weekend trips to Huntington Beach State Park, SC (January) and Boone, NC (May)
- Identifying "Little Brown Birds" class
- Having a booth or table at 7 festivals/events
- Working to increase our volunteers

Are we going to rest on last year's accomplishments? No, we are planning to continue with all of these activities and more. I am sure that is something that we're doing that will interest you and maybe encourage you to be more involved! You don't have to be an expert on birds or wildlife or plants to be involved; just a willingness to help educate, improve the environment, or have fun in the outdoors. I also ask that you support us through our bird seed sale (information in our mail out and on our website) or donating money or time to help us with our projects. You can check out any of our meetings and activities on our website (www.newhopeaudubon.org), our Facebook Group and/or Facebook Page, our Twitter account, or our list serve. See you soon!

Truth is Stranger than Fiction

by Norm Budnitz

"Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities. Truth isn't." *Mark Twain*

Writers of science fiction and fantasy are noteworthy in their ability to imagine scenarios beyond our everyday experience. Life on worlds without oxygen. Dragons. Mind reading and telepathy. Extraterrestrial beings. These make for tales of wonder and amusement. But we can find *true* stories right here on Earth that are just as wonderful and amusing. To accept these facts, requires that we accept a world full of organisms that are quite different from humans.

Consider: Birds can fly, and we humans have invented ways to fly in order to emulate them. But watch a chickadee as it darts from a tree and pulls up effortlessly at your



NHAS Reaches Out to Children

by Mary George



It's never too early to learn about birds



Member Pat Reid teaching about feathers

“Getting to Know Your Bird Neighbors” was a fun and interactive program offered by NHAS to children on July 11, 2015 at the Chapel Hill Public Library. Learning stations at the event included information on feathers, bird communication, bird nests, bird flight, and migration. In addition to stops at the learning stations, participants also played the bird I.D. game, looked through binoculars and a scope, played bean bag toss, made peanut butter/pine cone bird feeders, and colored bird pictures. Although the program was originally targeted for children ages 6-10, children of all ages enjoyed asking questions about birds and participating in the activities. Sixty-two participants attended the program. NHAS plans to offer similar programs in Durham and Chatham counties in the future. Educational materials and activities for the program were developed by the newly revitalized NHAS Education Committee. The members of the committee include Pat Reid, Tommy Richey, Maria deBruyn, Carol Tuskey, Tom Griffin, Tom Driscoll and Mary George. Two new members will be joining the committee, Karen MacAulay and Vern Bothwell, at the next meeting.



Member Tommy Richey teaches about how and what birds eat.



Truth is Stranger than Fiction cont'd from pg 1

bird feeder. That short flight is an exquisite series of nerve/muscle interactions that humans from the Wright brothers to modern aeronautical engineers can only dream about. Yes, humans can fly across the country in a matter of hours in our metal airplanes with their jet engines, but can we jump into the air, circling higher and higher on twittering wings, as the woodcock does just to impress his mate? Or flap our wings 60-80 times a *second* as the hummingbird does while hovering above a trumpet creeper flower?

Consider: The southern elephant seal who feeds her pup milk that is 60% fat. She can give birth to a 90 pound baby and wean that baby in about a month after it has become a rotund 450 pounds. A 90 pound baby? Weaned after one month? At 450 pounds? Human mothers, let that sink in for a moment.

Consider: The lowly sponge, living under the ice shelf in Antarctica. Not the plastic sponge that resides by your kitchen sink. I once saw a photograph of such a sponge taken by a scientist while diving under the ice in an effort to understand these creatures. The sponge couldn't move, of course, being a sedentary creature, attached on the rock it was anchored to. Also in the picture was a sea slug, a sort of shell-less snail, that was grazing on the sponge. The photo showed the trail left by the slug as it ate its way along. The scientist then showed a second photo of the same sponge with the same slug, with the grazing trail about one inch longer. But here's the thing: the second photo was taken *one year* after the first photo. Life in the slow lane. But life inexorable.

Watch this space for more truths that are stranger than fiction in the coming months.



Feeder Watch

By Tom Driscoll



Are your hummingbirds going crazy? Our hummingbirds are chasing each other around the garden to protect their feeders and our plants from other hummingbirds including juveniles. They are also chasing other hummingbirds away from the salvia and other plants that are in bloom. We have planted a lot of native flowering plants for hummingbirds and other pollinators. You will be hearing more about the benefits of planting native plants in the months to come as we are working with the National Audubon Society and Audubon North Carolina to promote the use of native plants.

The suet feeders have also been very busy. We are providing two cakes of suet every day! We have several species of woodpeckers, including Red-bellied, Hairy, and Downy Woodpeckers, that regularly come to the suet feeders and are still bringing their young. Other birds, including Gray Catbirds, White-breasted Nuthatches, Eastern Bluebirds, Pine Warblers, American Crows, Common Grackles, Tufted Titmice, and Brown Thrashers, are also eating suet. What birds dine at your suet feeders?

At this time of year, many of the birds, especially Northern Cardinals, may appear scraggly as they are molting into their new plumage. The Northern Cardinals can sometimes lose all their crown feathers and appear bald; not a pretty sight! The molting process is gradual and may take several months. During this time, the cardinals will continue to look sickly, but don't worry. They are fine! During the winter, the juvenile birds will molt into their adult plumage for spring.

If you have unusual bird sightings at your feeders or any questions about feeding birds, then please contact me at spttdrdshnk@yahoo.com!



NHAS Membership Meeting Speakers for 2015 – 2016

Our membership meetings are held in the Visitor Education Center at the North Carolina Botanical Gardens, 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!

Time/Date	Speaker	Topic
6:30 pm September 3, 2015	Members	Pot luck dinner and 10 best photos/slides (Note: earlier start time)
7:00 pm October 1, 2015	Kim Brand Audubon North Carolina	Bird Friendly Communities
7:00 pm November 5, 2015	John Goebel Durham Open Space and Trails Commission	Sandy Creek Park
7:00 pm December 3, 2015	Jeff Beane NC Museum of Natural Sciences	The Natural History of the Southern Hognose Snake
7:00 pm January 7, 2016	Jeff Phippen JP Ecology Consulting	Habitat restoration in Montana
7:00 pm February 4, 2016	Natalia Ocampo Penuela & Scott Winton, Duke University	Birds and Window Collisions
7:00 pm March 3, 2016	Stephanie Krueger North Carolina Zoo	Birds of the North Carolina Zoo Aviary
7:00 pm April 7, 2016	Derb Carter Southern Environmental Law Center	To be announced
7:00 pm May 5, 2016	Norm Budnitz New Hope Audubon Society	Birds—What are they? Who are they? What do they do?



Calendar of Activities



Thurs Sept 3 6:30 - 8:30pm: Potluck with 10 slides per person

NHAS Monthly Meeting at the North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill. Please note the earlier start dinner will be held along with a presentation of member's 10 best pictures.

Sat, Sept 5, 8-9:00am: Stream Watch with John Kent

John will lead the New Hope Creek Stream Watch monitoring. John leads a team that conducts monthly monitoring of the pollutants and microorganisms in the creek to gauge water quality. If interested in participating, then please contact John at jnkent25@gmail.com.

Thu, Oct 1, 7:00 pm-8:30 pm: "Bird Friendly Communities!"

NHAS Monthly Meeting at the North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill
Kim Brand of Audubon North Carolina will discuss Bird Friendly Communities.

Sat, Oct 3, 9-10:00am: Stream Watch with John Kent

John will lead the New Hope Creek Stream Watch monitoring. John leads a team that conducts monthly monitoring of the pollutants and microorganisms in the creek to gauge water quality. If interested in participating, then please contact John at jnkent25@gmail.com.

Help your feathered friends and New Hope Audubon Society, too - --buy your winter supply of bird seed from us! By Mary George, Chair

The annual NHAS Bird Seed Sale is your opportunity to buy good quality birdseed, and is one of our important fund raisers to assist in funding projects which promote the conservation and enjoyment of birds and other wildlife. Paper order forms have been sent to members in our annual mailing and online order forms are available on our web site. The deadline for placing orders this year is October 14, 2015. The pickup date is Saturday, October 31, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. inside the Wild Bird Center, Eastgate Shopping Center, Chapel Hill, N.C. Orders will be delivered to: Fearrington Village, Carolina Meadows, Carol Woods, and upon request to elderly or special needs individuals who reside in the area.

The link to our bird seed sale on the NHAS web page is:

<http://newhopeaudubon.org/birdseedsale2015.html>

We need your help in getting the word out about the bird seed sale! Here are ways you can help:

- If your neighborhood has a listserv and you would be willing to post an announcement to the listserv, please contact Mary George at mcgeorge44@gmail.com to receive copy for the announcement as well as an order form to post;
- Personally tell your friends, neighbors and co-workers about the bird seed sale and encourage them to purchase their winter supply of bird seed through NHAS....make sure they have an order form;
- And, of course, be sure to place your own order.

We urge you to buy as much seed as you need for the entire winter from our local Audubon Chapter.



Bird Friendly Habitat

FALL IS THE BEST TIME TO START MAKING YOUR YARD A BIRD FRIENDLY HABITAT

Fall is the ideal time to start or improve a bird-friendly garden. Plants, including trees, get a better start in the fall and develop strong root systems over the winter to help survive the heat of next summer. So think about adding native plants to support the birds, removing invasive plants, and taking other steps to improve your habitat for birds.

Since the last newsletter, we officially launched the New Hope Audubon Bird Friendly Certification program. See newhopeaudubon.org/birdfriendly.html for details.

We also have links to many other helpful resources on our website even if you are not interested in certification. These include:

- [Native Plants](#): Why use them, what ones to use, and where to buy them.
- [Invasive Plants](#): Why they are a problem, how to identify them, and how to remove them.
- [12 Ways to improve your habitat for birds and other wildlife.](#)

North Carolina Audubon has also been working hard on their Bird-Friendly Native Plants of the Year Program and have made arrangements with several local garden centers to sell these plants. Please see the details at their website: <http://bit.ly/birdfriendlygarden> and look for these tags at the nurseries listed on their website.





New Hope Audubon Officers for 2015-2016

President	Tom Driscoll		
Vice President	Bo Howes	Director	Mark Kosiewski
Treasurer	Vern Bothwell	Director	John Kent
Secretary	Pat Reid	Director	Carol Ripple

Committee Chairs and Special Projects

Education Chair	Mary George	Bird Seed Sale Chair	Mary George
Conservation Chair	Mark Kosiewski	Christmas & Spring Bird Counts Coordinator	Norm Budnitz
Membership Chair	Jim George	Eagle Count Coordinator	Steve McMurray
Publicity Chair	Jim George	Wildathon Chair	Vacant
Newsletter Editor	Pat Reid	Wildlife Observation Platform	Bo Howes
Programs Chair	Mark Kosiewski	Important Bird Area, Eno River	Tom Driscoll
Stream Watch	John Kent	Important Bird Area, Jordan Lake	Bo Howes
Hospitality Chair	Jill Paul	Archives Coordinator	Vacant
Webmaster	Norm Budnitz	Field Trip Chair	David Anderson