

# Flicker Flashes

Published by  
Birmingham Audubon

For conservation and greater knowledge  
of birds, their habitat, and natural world

## April Membership Program **Potluck Dinner and Recognition of Volunteers**

April 27, 6 to 8 p.m.  
Birmingham Botanical Gardens  
The Ireland Room

Mark your calendars for April's Member Appreciation program, April 27th in the Ireland Room at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens! This southern-style potluck dinner (Birmingham Audubon will bring the meat!) will run

from 6 to 8 p.m. Together, we'll review one of Birmingham Audubon's biggest years yet, and recognize the invaluable contributions of our organization's dedicated volunteers. We hope to see you there!



### 2017 Field Trips: Looking Ahead

Your field trips committee strives to select field trips that feature the full spectrum of Alabama's bird life. We have scheduled a wide variety of birding sites at destinations, and at times when birding will be ideally suited to finding the species of interest. Following is the schedule for the remaining 2017 field trips through summer:

- April 1: Moss Rock Preserve
- April 15: Brushy Creek Lake, Bankhead National Forest
- May 6: Monte Sano State Park
- June 24: Forever Wild State Cattle Ranch, Hale County
- July 29: Prattville, Autaugaville, Lowndesboro
- August 5: Greensboro-area catfish farms
- August 12: Gainesville, Aliceville, Livingston

*(Photo on Left) Upper Goldmine Creek Falls, Bankhead National Forest  
- Photo by Birmingham Audubon*

# April Half-day Field Trip Moss Rock Preserve

Hoover, Alabama

Saturday, April 1, 2017 - 7 a.m. - noon

A perfect balance of nature and community, Moss Rock Preserve is a beautiful 349-acre nature preserve located in Hoover. The preserve hosts forest ecosystems, rock outcroppings, streams, waterfalls, wildlife, and other unique natural features. Currently, Moss Rock Preserve is home to four rare species of plants and a rare variant of Little River Canyon Sandstone Glade that is thought to be one of only 35 occurrences known around the world!

There are 12 miles of trails in the preserve and we will visit at least two of them – the white trail and the powerline trail – to maximize our opportunities to find different species that utilize the habitats found on these trails. We can expect to find resident songbirds and raptors, but also early neotropical migrants – such as Louisiana waterthrush and red-eyed vireo – on their northbound migrations. It will likely take a group effort to locate ruby-throated hummingbirds and canopy-dwelling warblers.

Please note that this trip will necessarily involve a fair amount of walking on uneven terrain with some eleva-

tion changes. Sturdy walking/hiking shoes are strongly recommended.

**Plans:** Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Hoover McDonald's, located on US Hwy 31 across from the Galleria.

The address is 1731 Montgomery Hwy, Hoover, AL, 35244. We will carpool and caravan from here to the Boulder Field Trail Head Parking Lot, located at 617 Preserve Parkway in Hoover. Be sure to bring water and snacks, and remember to wear sturdy walking/hiking shoes.

**Trip leader:** Greg Harber, 208-807-8055 (day of trip only, please).



Northern parula - A bird we might see on this trip.  
Photo by Debbie McKenzie

# April Full-day Field Trip Brushy Creek Lake, Bankhead National Forest

Saturday, April 15, 2017, 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Fewer places in Alabama are more scenic than the Bankhead National Forest, and our April field trip will take us to one of the most scenic places there is: Brushy Creek Lake, where we will have our picnic lunch – so be sure to bring one with you. We will make several birding stops along the way, as well as visit at least one waterfall. You'll want to have your camera with you, for sure, and bring a tripod too, for those long exposure "bridal veil" images. Mid-April is an ideal time for birding. We can expect to see a multitude of neotropical migrants and resident songbirds and given, the time of the year, we can expect to hear plenty of bird song, too. In the past we have enjoyed excellent views of a variety of woodpeckers, both tanager species, and blue-winged and prairie warblers.

**Meeting Place and Travel Plans:** Our meeting place is the parking lot behind the Wells Fargo Bank at the Fieldstown Road Shopping Center in Gardendale, just off I-65N at exit

#271 (665 Fieldstown Road, Gardendale, AL, 35071). Turn right on to Fieldstown Road, another right onto Odum Road, and an immediate left into the shopping center. We will leave at 7:00 a.m. (please arrive early for pre-trip instructions) and caravan up I-65N to Cullman, and from there we will travel west via US 278 to Addison, north on CR 41 to FS 266.

**Trip leader:** Greg Harber, 208-807-8055 (day of trip only, please).



*All Birmingham Audubon field trips are free and open to the public.*

*Additional trip information may be found at our website, [birminghamaudubon.org](http://birminghamaudubon.org) and on our Facebook page.*

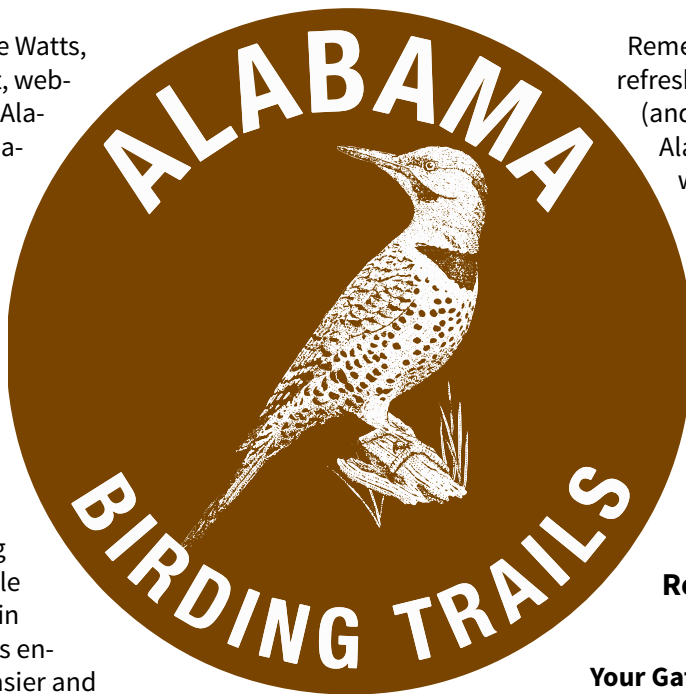
**Audubon Teaches Nature**  
**Alabama Birding Trails**  
**Presented by Joe Watts, guest speaker**

Sunday, April 30, 2017 - 2 p.m.

Alabama Wildlife Center at Oak Mountain

We are fortunate to have Joe Watts, Birmingham Audubon president, webmaster and the guru behind the Alabama Birding Trails site ([alabama-birdingtrails.com](http://alabama-birdingtrails.com)), speak to us about the extensive birding trail system here in Alabama. If you have ever wondered where to go birding – either near your home or while on a trip – this is the program for you.

Over 400 species of birds occur in Alabama, making our state an excellent place to indulge in your birdwatching hobby. The Alabama Birding Trail, with 270 publicly accessible sites scattered across the state in eight geographic regions, makes enjoying your hobby that much easier and convenient. Joe will offer you a virtual tour of some of the best birding locations in Alabama. Be sure to attend to discover which one is located close to you!



Remember to come early to enjoy refreshments in the Observation Room (and the birds at the feeders) at the Alabama Wildlife Center, and then, when it's time for the program, we'll proceed to the auditorium for the program. Weather permitting, after the program we'll take a bird walk within the park to search for early spring migrants and lingering winter visitors.

**Remaining ATN seminars:**

**Alabama State Parks:**  
**Your Gateway to Outdoor Recreation**

Emily Vanderford, Guest Speaker  
Sunday, May 21, 2017, 2:00 p.m.  
Oak Mountain Interpretive Center



*Joe Watts, president, Birmingham Audubon*

# Conservation Roundup for April 2017

Birmingham Audubon has a long history of connecting people to outdoor recreation in places where natural habitats important for birds and other elements of our natural heritage have long-term protection. This is a key reason that Birmingham Audubon has been a supporter of adequate funding to keep our Alabama State Parks open to the public, culminating in passage of a constitutional amendment (by 75% voter approval!) in November 2016 that ensures that state park gate receipts and other revenue come back to the state park system for their operations. We also support the acquisition of additional State Park lands by the Alabama Forever Wild Program.

Over the past six months, there have been some important new additions of land to various State Parks by the Forever Wild Program. In October 2016, some 640 acres of rugged forestland were added to Guntersville State Park in



*Perdido River - Photo by Chris Oberholster*

the Stubblefield Mountain area. During the same month, another 134 acres were acquired at Monte Sano State Park in Huntsville with the Dug Hill West Addition.

Another outdoor recreational highlight was the announcement on February 9th of the new Perdido River Canoe Trail in Baldwin County. The Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources has established multiple access points along a 19-mile segment of the Perdido River that fronts on over 17,000

acres of Forever Wild and other protected state lands. Public access infrastructure along the river here now includes three boat landings, and six camping shelters. More information can be found on the Alabama State Lands Division Canoe Trails website: [www.alabamacanoetrails.com](http://www.alabamacanoetrails.com)

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## Become an Education Volunteer!



Help Birmingham Audubon create the next generation of birders, naturalists, and advocates for conservation by becoming an education volunteer! Big changes are in the works for our school programs this fall, and we'll need volunteers who can work in classrooms and in the field. Have experience with young people? Know your basic birds and habitats? If so, we'd love to work with you. For more information on how you can help, contact the Outreach Director: [anselpayne@birminghamaudubon.org](mailto:anselpayne@birminghamaudubon.org)

*Become an education volunteer, and help make a better future for birds and people. Photo by Birmingham Audubon.*

# Name that Bird – Early Migrant Edition



Not quite Kodachrome . . . Photo: BA Archives

By the time the current issue of *Flicker Flashes* ends up in your mailboxes, this small neotropical migrant will already be clinging to bark and snapping up insects throughout Alabama; a breeder in the state's northern regions, it's one of the earlier spring arrivals from Central and northern South America. Still need a hint? Consider the bird's unusual, nuthatch-like behavior—when it's out foraging, you're as likely to see it upside down as right-side up. In other words, it's a strange bird, even within its famously *colorful* family!

**Think you've got it? We'll have the answer for you in next month's *Flicker Flashes*!**

Last month's "Name That Bird" was (drumroll). . . the **White-throated Sparrow** (*Zonotrichia albicollis*).

## Birmingham Audubon Fifty-Second Annual Spring Bird Count

Saturday, April 29, 2017

As I write on this evening in early March, reports have already been posted to various listserves and Facebook pages about neotropical migrants returning to our shores, and so our attention naturally turns to the April 29th BAS Spring Bird Count – our 52nd annual spring count!

This is a fun count, when we venture out to welcome our returning neotropical migrants. The count provides a wonderful opportunity to spend some time outdoors and watch the feathered parade as the birds follow their migration route north! Many of the local breeding birds will be well on their way to raising young too.

This all-day count will cover parts of Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair and Blount counties, and we'll need as many participants as possible to adequately cover the area. Even though this is an all-day count, you may join a party for any part of the day if you only have a limited amount of time. It is essential though that you make arrangements now to join a party on count day. Feel free to call me at 251-2133 for the names and phone numbers of party leaders in your area. Or, you may wish to count the birds at your feeders and call or email your report to me later. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks will surely reward those who take the time to watch at home!



Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Photo by Debbie McKenzie

At the end of the day we will gather to compile our results, swap stories and share our adventures of the day. Those fortunate enough to find a real rarity should expect to provide appropriate written documentation. Greg Harber will handle compiling duties and Elberta Reid will host our compilation at her home, located at 2616 Mountain Brook Parkway. Call Elberta if you need directions: 879-1935. The compilation will begin at 7:00 p.m. and light refreshments will be provided.

Greg Harber,  
For Bird Counts committee



*Photo by Bob Farley*

# **The Fortieth Annual Birmingham Audubon Mountain Workshop**

**Thursday, May 11 to Sunday, May 14, 2017**

**At Alpine Camp, Mentone, Alabama**

Birmingham Audubon Mountain Workshop, one of the South's oldest and largest events dedicated to the study of natural history, is turning forty this year! We hope you'll consider joining us in May as we celebrate this historic milestone with another great year of classes exploring the ecology, wildlife, and culture of beautiful northeastern Alabama. Together with our faculty, you'll enjoy a broad overview of the region's natural and cultural history, with classes on forest ecology, stream biology, beginning and advanced bird identification, animal tracking, insect identification, paleontology, Native American culture, early Alabama architecture, caving, and much more. The University of Mississippi's Dr. Scott Rush will give this year's keynote address, discussing his ongoing analysis of the late Bob Sargent's long-term bird-banding data, and the University of Alabama's Dr. John Abbott and Kendra Abbott will offer an intensive pre-workshop nature photography course. All classes and talks are held either on the campus of Mentone's historic Alpine Camp or in one of several natural areas located around Mentone and nearby

Fort Payne. Students and faculty stay in the rustic cabins or lodges at Alpine Camp or at nearby DeSoto State Park, both surrounded by the beautiful Appalachian landscape. While you're at it, consider making Birmingham Audubon Mountain Workshop a family tradition with our Young Naturalist Program, an outdoor-education curriculum for children ages five to twelve. All Young Naturalist activities are taught and supervised by our adult academic faculty, with assistance from an invited Guest Director and Birmingham Audubon Outreach Director Dr. Ansel Payne. Generations of Young Naturalists have now enjoyed this program's hands-on activities and extensive science- and nature-based opportunities. For more information on this program, including pricing and registration, visit [birminghamaudubon.org/bamw](http://birminghamaudubon.org/bamw). We hope to see you "up on the mountain" this spring!

Have memories of previous Mountain Workshops? We'd love to see hear/read/see them. Email your old photos or stories to: [andycoleman@birminghamaudubon.org](mailto:andycoleman@birminghamaudubon.org)

# Join and Support Birmingham Audubon

**Are birds, wildlife and our natural habitat of interest to you?**

**If so, we invite you to be a part of a community that enjoys, values and protects birds and our natural world.**

Founded in 1946, the Birmingham Audubon Society is Alabama's leading non-profit organization engaging people in the enjoyment and conservation of birds, their habitats and the natural world. With your support, we involve people through recreational birding, by extending their horizons with education programs, and by engaging them in conservation actions such as planting trees, counting birds, and working with local, state, and national policy makers.

## **There are many ways you can support Birmingham Audubon**

Please join us and make a difference for birds and your quality of life, right here in Alabama!

### **Membership**

Take the first step and become a Member of Birmingham Audubon. Get connected with our *Flicker Flashes* newsletter. See birds by participating in one of our free field trips, and learn something at one of our free monthly programs.

### **Make a Donation**

We rely on your support and are proud to work on your behalf to restore wildlife habitat, conserve areas that are important to birds, and inspire appreciation and understanding of our natural world. Your generous donation, above and beyond the basic membership dues, is an important source of funding which allows Birmingham Audubon to facilitate our vital mission of connecting people with birds and the places they live.

### **Your memberships and donations support:**

- **Free monthly programs on nature and science topics**
- **Free field trips led by expert birders to great birding cultural locations**
- **Annual banquet with nationally recognized speaker**
- **Discounted registration for Birmingham Audubon Mountain Workshop**
- **Members-only birding classes**
- **Graduate student research grants**
- **Adult and student education opportunities and initiatives**
- **Alabama Birding Trails**
- **Local, state and national conservation initiatives**
- **Members-only Lending Library**

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## **Birmingham Audubon Society Membership Application**

Join  Renew **Annual Membership: \$ 20.00**

**Donation to support the programs & projects of Birmingham Audubon: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Please make check payable to:

**Birmingham Audubon Society**

Please charge my credit card

**Visa**  **MasterCard**

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Birmingham Audubon Society is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Your donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.**

Please keep my donation anonymous

Yes  No

I want to receive communications electronically

Yes  No

I want to be contacted to learn about volunteer activities

Yes  No

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**Birmingham Audubon Society**  
3720 Fourth Avenue S, Second Floor  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
Phone: 205-719-3678  
[www.birminghamaudubon.org](http://www.birminghamaudubon.org)

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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

**Office Address and Mailing Address:**  
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Phone: 205-719-3678



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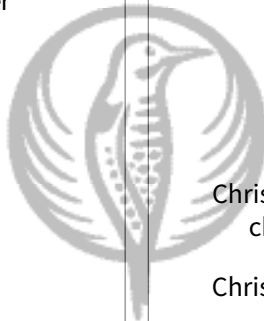
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## April 2017

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**Birmingham Audubon is a staffed chapter of National Audubon Society with offices located at: 3720 Fourth Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35222. Phone number: 205-719-3678**

Suzanne Langley, Executive Director:  
suzannelangley@birminghamaudubon.org

Andy Coleman, Ph.D., Program Director:  
andycoleman@birminghamaudubon.org

Ansel Payne, Ph.D., Outreach Director:  
anselpayne@birminghamaudubon.org

Chris Oberholster, Partnership and Policy Director:  
chrisoberholster@birminghamaudubon.org

Chris Sykes, Membership & Volunteer Coordinator:  
chrissykes@birminghamaudubon.org