

Flicker Flashes

Published by
The Birmingham Audubon Society

For conservation and greater knowledge of
all wildlife, wilderness and natural resources

M A R C H M O N T H L Y M E E T I N G

Thursday, March 16, 2006, 7:00 p.m.

Birmingham Zoo Auditorium

TNC's Current Initiatives in Alabama

Jeff Danter, Executive Director, Alabama Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

This month's meeting gives us the opportunity to welcome Jeff Danter and gives him the opportunity to deliver the presentation that was blown away by Hurricane Ollie in September 2004. Jeff will tell us about TNC's current initiatives in Alabama.

The Nature Conservancy of Alabama has been very active in protecting the last great places in our beautiful state. Jeff will give a slide presentation of the many beautiful locations the Conservancy has worked to protect. Among these are the newly acquired Walls of Jericho property in Jackson County and additional acreage for the Case Pine Hills Reserve protecting the largest known population of the federally endangered Alabama canebrake pitcher plant. The canebrake pitcher plant is one of Alabama's rarest species. The Nature Conservancy has worked to protect many treasures in our state. Jeff's program will renew your appreciation for the beauty and diversity found here in Alabama.

Jeff earned three degrees from Ohio State University and graduated with a Ph.D. in Natural Resources Management. Jeff worked for more than nine years in private industry in corporate finance for ABB, one of the world's leading electrical engineering corporations. Before moving to Birmingham in 2002, Jeff lived in Kissimmee, Florida where he was the project director for TNC's Disney Wilderness Preserve. This preserve is a 12000 acre restoration partnership

Jeff lives in Vestavia Hills, Alabama with his wife and son.

Attend and enjoy this program. Please come early at 6:45 to socialize and enjoy some refreshments. Guests are welcome.

~Hans Paul,
VP Programs

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HALF-DAY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, March 4, 2006

Roebuck Springs Park

Saturday, March 4, we will travel to an interesting new location, Roebuck Springs, which several members have enjoyed visiting on their own in the past. Birds such as Wood Ducks, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Rusty Blackbirds, and even Hooded Mergansers (a pair last year) have been sighted around the Springs. On our trip, we'll also hope for a hawk or two, as well as some white-throated sparrows and other winter birds. (By the way, this location is also one of only three places in the world where Watercress Darters are found.)

Travel Plans: Frank Farrell will lead this half-day trip. Please plan to meet at the McDonald's Restaurant just off I-59 on the Roebuck Parkway at 8:00 a.m. If you have any questions about the trip, please call Frank at 815-3554.



SoSo For the Record

Sightings December 9, 2005 through February 5, 2006

The "Star" of this period is the male **Costa's Hummingbird** visiting a Montgomery feeder. This wonderful surprise was banded by Fred Bassett, a member of the Hummer/Bird Study Group. As far as anyone knows this is the first record of this tiny hummer east of the Rockies. It is fairly common in desert washes, dry chaparral, and occurs casually north to south coastal Alaska and west to Texas. Of course visitors have been

plentiful. Many thanks to the hosts, Ginny and Tom Thatcher, for their generous hospitality.

The Sargents are reporting three to four hundred **American Goldfinches** as well as at least eighty **Purple Finches** and two **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, but **no Pine Siskins**.

Other birds seen were:

12/9 **Snow Goose- blue morph (10)**; Trussville (RB).

12/22 **Bald Eagle**; Near (a lake) Robert Trent Golf Course, Jeff Co (JD).

1/1 **Great Black-backed Gull**; Guntersville (SM).

1/7 **Glaucous Gull**; Colbert Co (DS et al).
Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk (4), Red-tailed Hawk; Downtown Birmingham (GH et al).

1/12 **Calliope Hummingbird**; Home of Mr. and Mrs. John Corns near Edwards Lake Road (BS,MS).

1/19 **Possible Yellow-billed Loon**; Guntersville (DR,LR).

1/23 **Vermillion Flycatcher**; still present, Wheeler Refuge (PF,NP).

1/24 **Baltimore Oriole** ("A beautiful male, for the second year") Montgomery (CA).

Contributors:

Carol Alford
Fred Bassett
Richard Beard
Mr. and Mrs. John Corns
Jerry Defoor
Paul Franklin
Greg Harber
Steve Matherly
Ned Piper
Dick and Linda Reynolds
Bob and Martha Sargent
Damien Simbeck
Tom and Ginny Thatcher



We have, unfortunately, lost a very special person, Bob Reid, but we will never forget his many contributions to all the good things he stood for. Thank you Bob, we miss you.

Please submit sightings for April FF at least FIVE days before the March 10th deadline to Ann Miller, 520 Yorkshire Drive, Birmingham, Al. 35209.

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Tom Imhof Family Bird Walk

Saturday, April 8, 2006

Birmingham Zoo

Our April half-day field trip, in memory of long-time BAS member Tom Imhof, will be a stroll along the perimeter road adjacent to the parking area. And, since we will be at the Birmingham Zoo, this is the perfect time to bring your children and grandchildren! This outing is an excellent choice for beginners and those who like short trips since we will limit our walking to the woods surrounding the zoo. Spring migrants will be passing through and with any luck some may be singing. We will not be entering the Zoo proper as part of the field trip.

Meet: 7:00 A.M. at the Birmingham Zoo Auditorium. Patty Pendleton, Zoo staff, will provide coffee, juice and donuts.

Trip Leaders: Harriett Wright, 967-0955 and Elberta Reid, 879-1935

MARCH FIELD TRIP

Saturday, March 18, 2006

Perry Lakes Park & Lakeland Farms

Marion, Alabama

On March 18th, The Birmingham Audubon Society will be hosting a field trip to Perry Lakes Park and Lakeland Farms in Marion, Alabama. This trip is traditionally one of the more popular trips that the society makes, and with good reason.

We will spend the morning searching for migrants around the oxbows of Perry Lakes Park and the adjacent area. The park is also the home of the birding tower project being conducted by students of the Auburn Rural Studio, so we will have the opportunity to survey the work that they have done. Historically, this has also been a good site to catch a glimpse of a Bald Eagle or two as well as Yellow-throated and Prothonotary Warblers.

Following lunch on the park grounds, we will move down the road to the Lakeland Farms area. This is an exciting area for birding, as one never knows what to

expect to be residing here. Past visits have included Common Moorhen, Blue-winged Teal and numerous sparrow species.

Travel Plans: We will depart from the McDonalds on U.S. 31 in Hoover, across from the Galleria, at 7:00 a.m. From there, we will proceed to the Centerville/Brent area. It is there where we will stop for an early morning break at the Wendy's on Alabama Highway 5 near its intersection with U.S. Highway 82. Then we will proceed directly to Perry Lakes Park. We will be eating a picnic lunch, so pack accordingly. Don't forget the bug spray, just because the calendar says March does not mean the bugs will not be biting.

Trip Leaders: Helen Kittinger & Ty Keith (205-933-8711)

To elementary school teachers and middle and high school science teachers in Jefferson, Shelby, and surrounding counties:

ANNOUNCING:

**Birmingham Audubon Society
Ecology/Environmental Education Workshop
Scholarships for Spring and Summer of 2006**

Birmingham Audubon Society's Audubon Mountain Workshop, May 11-14, 2006

Held at Alpine Camp in Mentone, Alabama, this workshop begins on a Thursday evening and concludes on Sunday at noon. Not exclusively for educators, it attracts adults and young people from throughout the state. Among session topics are bird identification, wildflowers, stream and forest ecology, animal ecology, mammals, insects, reptiles, geology and fossils, canoeing, and mountain crafts. Most classes are taught by college professors and are conducted in the field. The five scholarships to this workshop cover tuition which includes lodging and all meals. Application deadline is April 1.

Maine Audubon Society's Workshop for Educators, July 9-15, 2006

This nationally renowned workshop held at Hog Island, Maine, is for both science and non-science teachers who are or would like to be incorporating environmental education into their lesson plans. The session allows time to interact with and learn from peers in a beautiful natural setting. Included will be field trips, boat cruises, discussions, workshops, special presentations, and numerous hands-on experiential activities intended for direct application in a classroom. The two scholarships BAS offers to this workshop include tuition and up to \$500 toward transportation costs. Application deadline is March 15.

For applications and more information: www.birminghamaudubon.org. Click on Grants and Scholarships. Or call Ann Sweeney at 879-7127

ROBERT R. REID, JR. MEMORIALS

The Birmingham Audubon Society gratefully acknowledges the following contributions in memory of Robert R. Reid, Jr. to support land conservation efforts on Dauphin Island. Bob was an avid supporter of the Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc. and dedicated in his work toward bird conservation efforts.

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Louise Ayer & Joe Tommie
Family of David J. Vann:, Michael Lee Vann,
Lillian F. Vann & Ruth Vann Lillian
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Meg Winfree Ripley & Bobbie Winfree
Mr. & Mrs. Fritz Woehle
Harriett H. Wright
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Young III

Friends of Locust Fork River

Come honor the Friends of the Locust Fork River's dedication to preserving this unique free-flowing river at its 15th Anniversary Celebration.

Blount County native son, Dr. Doug Phillips, of Discovering Alabama fame is the guest speaker.
Door Prize: Raft trip down the Locust Fork River for you and several friends

WHEN: Saturday, April 8, 2006; 5-8:00 PM

5:00 Mingling & Munching

6:00-8:00 Program & Meeting

WHERE: B.S. Lloyd Lodge at Palisades Park. Follow signs to the park about 1 mile past Oneonta on Hwy. 231 N.

RSVP/more info: otebear@urisp.net

Oppose the Walden Logging Bill (H.R 4200) - New Science Shows Bill is Flawed.

Greg Walden (R-OR) and Brian Baird (D-WA) introduced the Walden logging bill, deceptively called the "Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act (HR 4200). The bill eliminates or undercuts key environmental safeguards for forests, water, fish and wildlife in order to rush logging and roadbuilding projects after natural events that occur in National Forests, such as fires, insect outbreaks and windstorms.

A study published last month in the prestigious journal Science, conducted by Dan Donato, an Oregon State University graduate student and Forest Service researchers, discredited the premise of the Walden logging bill. Rather than "recover and restore" forests as Walden claims, the study found that logging in the 2002 Biscuit fire area in

Southern Oregon impeded forest regeneration by crushing new seedlings and increased fire risk by leaving piles of tree limbs and branches. This is the study that nine OSU professors led by John Sessions, Forest Engineer, tried to block Science from publishing.

Now that Congress is back in session, the Walden logging bill is expected to move quickly. Afloor vote may be possible as early as March. Calls are needed to your Member of Congress to urge them to oppose this damaging and scientifically flawed bill.

TAKE ACTION: Please call your Representative and tell them to oppose the Walden logging H.R. 4200. To look up your member of Congress, go to: www.congress.org or call the Capitol Hill switchboard at: 202.224.3121

Walden Logging Bill Talking Points

- * The Walden logging bill undermines protections for forests, fish and wildlife in order to rush logging after normal natural events, such as rainstorms and fires on National Forests.
- * The best available science shows that logging in forests recovering from fire can be very damaging and can actually increase fire risk by leaving piles of limbs and branches. Letting trees regenerate naturally works better than logging and replanting. Bulldozers destroy naturally regenerating fragile seedlings. Logs left in place following fires or other disturbances are crucial building blocks for the reemerging forest.
- * Logging after fires is a huge loss to taxpayers. According to a new report by scientists, former Forest Service employees, and conservation groups, the Forest Service loses taxpayer money, on post- fire logging. On the 2002 Southern Oregon Biscuit fire area alone, the Forest Service has lost approximately \$14 million as of 2006.
- * Community protection priorities will be misplaced. The bill creates incentives to shift agency efforts away from much-needed community protection and true forest restoration; toward destructive logging projects that delay recovery and can actually increase fire danger.
- * Public participation will be reduced. The Walden Logging Bill exempts projects from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), our law that provides government accountability and ensures that agencies must let the public know about a project and its environmental impacts before moving forward.
- * In Mississippi the US Forest Service has already developed plans to deal with the damage from hurricanes Katrina and Rita. These plans have been rapidly developed using existing laws and environmental reviews without setting up a new process that eliminates environmental protections and public participation. See the report below for a better description.

Birmingham Audubon Society

70th Annual Christmas Bird Count

Friday, December 23, 2005



Temp. 21-66 degrees, with clear to high clouds. Observers (24) in 9 parties spent 80.75 hours in the field, covered a total of 308 miles, observed 82 species and count week Turkey (7), Osprey (1) and Bald Eagle (1), for a total of 273,889 individuals (including 250,000 Blackbird species courtesy of Maureen Shaffer). Highlights included Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (1), Green Heron (1) and Rufous Hummingbird (1, banded). Some of the obvious lowlights were Sharp-shinned Hawk (1), Screech-Owl (0), Great Horned Owl (1), Loggerhead Shrike (1), Purple Finch (1) and Pine Siskin (1).

Canada Goose	432	Red-headed Woodpecker	38	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Wood Duck	14	Red-bellied Woodpecker	44	Yellow-rumped Warbler	250
Mallard	6	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	34	Pine Warbler	14
Green-winged Teal	9	Downy Woodpecker	48	Palm Warbler	1
Ring-necked Duck	87	Hairy Woodpecker	5	Black-and-white Warbler	1
Ruddy Duck	2	Northern Flicker	30	Common Yellowthroat	1
Pied-billed Grebe	15	Pileated Woodpecker	7	Eastern Towhee	40
Great Blue Heron	32	Eastern Phoebe	29	Chipping Sparrow	240
Green Heron	1	Loggerhead Shrike	1	Field Sparrow	28
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	1	Blue-headed Vireo	1	Savannah Sparrow	4
Turkey Vulture	17	Blue Jay	129	Song Sparrow	140
Osprey	cv	American Crow	812	Swamp Sparrow	26
Bald Eagle	cv	Fish Crow	8	White-throated Sparrow	261
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	Carolina Chickadee	172	Dark-eyed Junco	209
Cooper's Hawk	5	Tufted Titmouse	176	Northern Cardinal	252
Red-shouldered Hawk	8	White-breasted Nuthatch	51	Red-winged Blackbird	10623
Red-tailed Hawk	31	Brown-headed Nuthatch	45	Eastern Meadowlark	8
American Kestrel	7	Brown Creeper	7	Rusty Blackbird	14
Peregrine Falcon	cv	Carolina Wren	98	Common Grackle	3657
American Coot	9	Winter Wren	4	Brown-headed Cowbird	6
Killdeer	76	Golden-crowned Kinglet	62	Blackbird species	250000
Wilson's Snipe	15	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	63	Purple Finch	1
Ring-billed Gull	1	Eastern Bluebird	109	House Finch	43
Rock Pigeon	1637	Hermit Thrush	10	Pine Siskin	1
Mourning Dove	384	American Robin	1212	American Goldfinch	139
Great Horned Owl	1	Northern Mockingbird	182	House Sparrow	98
Barred Owl	4	Brown Thrasher	18		
Rufous Hummingbird	1	European Starling	742		
Belted Kingfisher	15	Cedar Waxwing	872		

Observers by party leaders in boldface: **John Imhof**, Dick Mills, Michael Imhof, **Helen Kittinger**, Rick Kittinger, Tom Blankenship, Lela Ann Brewer, Frank Farrell, Shirley Farrell, Mac Braid, **Stan Hamilton**, Dana Hamilton, Ty Keith, **Maureen Shaffer**, Elouise Rafferty, Cindy Pinger, Martha Dagg, Alan Yester, Lyda Hill, Herman E. Kirk, **Greg Harber**, Jessica Germany, **Sharon Hudgins**, David George, Jim Sherrill.

Thanks to all leaders and participants and a special thank you to our compilation hosts, Jessica Germany and Ed Senter, for opening their home (and kitchen - good soup, Jessica!) to us. In years past, Tom Imhof and Bob Reid each managed to compile and submit Christmas Bird Counts single-handedly. This year, it took three: I called the list, hand-entered on my tally sheet and collected the money. Greg Harber entered the tally directly onto his computer spreadsheet. David George then took our material and submitted it to National Audubon. It just reminds us what marvelously talented and dedicated people came before us. It takes more than one of us to even begin to fill the toe of one shoe. We miss them.

~Sharon Hudgins/Greg Harber/David George, Compilers

The following refreshment was served at the January Audubon meeting and several people asked for the recipe.

Melt Aways

- 1 c. margarine, softened
- 1 c. sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 1 egg, separated
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Cream margarine and sugar until light and fluffy. Blend in egg yolk, salt, vanilla and flour; then pecans.

Spread dough evenly in a lightly greased 15x10x1 inch jelly roll pan (you'll have to use your hands!)

Beat egg white until frothy and brush over dough. Bake at 350°, 25-30 minutes. Cool slightly and cut into bars. Yield: 50-60 bars.

~Jinksie Burnam

Mark your calendars now!

**Earth Day at the Gardens
Sunday, April 9th
at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens**

**The Shades Valley Camera Club presents Tom Ulrich
Friday, March 17, 2006
Birmingham Zoo Auditorium**

Tom Ulrich, well-known wildlife photographer, will be in town Friday, March 17, 2006. Ulrich, from West Glacier Montana, will present, "Living Wild With Tom Ulrich" at 7PM at the Birmingham Zoo Auditorium. The program is free and open to the public. For more information call 249-7154.

This program will highlight Mr. Ulrich's world travels in 2005. Tom Ulrich's website with photos and more information is: <http://www.tomulrich-photos.com/index.htm>

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**~ Membership Application ~
Birmingham Audubon Society/ National Audubon Society**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: () _____

Membership Levels:

- Introductory membership ~ \$20.00**
Includes quarterly subscription to Audubon magazine and 8 issues of *Flicker Flashes*, the chapter newsletter.
Senior (62 & older) and student (full-time) memberships available for \$15.00.
(Preferred method of payment for all new members is through the chapter, using this form).
- Regular membership/Renewals ~ \$20.00**
The National Audubon Society handles membership renewals through their Membership Data Center. Contact them at 1-800-274-4201 or write them at P.O. Box 52529, Boulder, CO 80322-2529. Submit renewals directly to NAS.
- My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

Please make check payable to: National Audubon Society
Mail this form and check to: Birmingham Audubon Society
P. O. Box 314
Birmingham, AL35201

Birmingham Audubon Society * AOO 7XCH8

March

- 4 BAS Field Trip, Ruffner, East Lake Park & Roebuck Springs
- 7 Conservation Committee meeting
7:00 p.m., Homewood Library
- 10 *Flicker Flashes* articles due
- 14-18 Spring Tour #1
- 16 Board Meeting, (BZA) 5:45 p.m.
General Meeting, BZA 7:00 p.m.
Michelle Blackwood and Ken Wills
- 18 BAS Field Trip, Marion Co. & Lakeland Farms
- 19-23 Spring Tour #2
- 25 City of Clay Birdfest

April

- 1 BAS Sanctuary Workday
- 8 Family Bird Walk - Birmingham Zoo
7:00 a.m.
- 10 *Flicker Flashes* articles due
- 11 Conservation Committee meeting
7:00 p.m., Homewood Library
- 15 BAS Field Trip, Sipse River Swamp
- 21-23 AOS Spring meeting - Dauphin Island
- 27 Board Meeting, (BZA) 5:45 p.m.
General Meeting, BZA 7:00 p.m.
"Members Favorite Slides"
- 29 41st Annual BAS Spring Bird Count

Birmingham Audubon Society
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
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