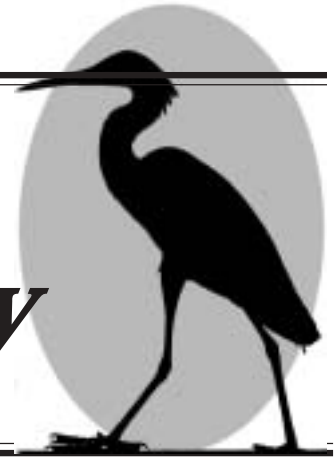


Mobile Bay Audubon Society

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY SINCE 1971



VOLUME XXIII NO. 2



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Plans are coming together well for the first annual Alabama Coastal Birdfest thanks to the numerous people in our area concerned about the environment and their willingness to help out. There is a lot more work to be done so it's not too late to volunteer. Call John Borom and he will let you know in what areas you can help (990-0423).

The Alabama Coastal BirdFest will include birding trips, great Southern hospitality, seminars, children's activities, educational exhibits, evening lectures and a few workshops.

Although the site is not totally complete, the chapter website has the scheduled activities as well as other important information. Go to www.mobilebayaudubon.org/birdfest to keep informed.

Bird Awareness Day

The Alabama State Lands Division and Historic Blakeley State Park are jointly sponsoring Bird Awareness Day at the Gatra Wehle Nature Center at Historic Blakeley State Park on Saturday, April 3rd, 2004. Blakeley State Park will be open with special hours from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M and there will be no charge for admission into the park that day. The concept of Bird Awareness Day is to foster an appreciation for birds. This event will focus on bird identification, importance of birds to the environment, and what people are doing to conserve birds today. Knowledgeable and experienced professionals will present informative lectures and lead field trips to enable people to learn more about the birds in our state and better understand the important issues that are currently affecting them. This year's speakers include representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Faulkner State Community

Continued on page 3

Board of Directors

2004

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Favorite Field Guides

By Celeste Hinds

My library of field guides increases every year. I am a sucker for bird books and can't pass up a new one, even though it's a revision of a previously published book. I'm waiting for David Sibley's pocket size field guide. It's out, but I have not purchased it. His National Audubon Society *The Sibley Guide to Birds* is my current favorite, although it does not fit in my pocket or fanny pack. It's heavy, but well worth having on a field trip for some of the hybrids, if nothing else. The illustrations are superb. The National Geographic Society *Field Guide to the Birds of North America* goes everywhere with me, even though it's a bit heavier than Golden *A Guide to Field Identification - Birds of North America*. For my beginning bird classes I recommend the Golden book because it seems a little more user friendly.



The 1966 edition of A Golden Field Guide *Birds of North America* is still one of my favorites, mainly because it contains my notes and scribbles in the margins and I like the illustrations. Hardly any of the information has changed, although some of the common names were changed back and forth. The Baltimore Oriole went to Northern Oriole and is now back to Baltimore.

Peterson Field Guide *Hawks* by William S. Clark and Brian K. Wheeler are a must in my car, as well as Peterson Field Guide *Eastern Birds' Nests*. I wish the "nests" book was more complete. My copy of Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds* has traveled all over with me and always comes in handy. Some birders use no other.

A 1949 Golden Guide *Birds* will fit in my smallest pocket and remains one of my favorites. Its cover is faded and torn from many years of constant use. My forty-something year old son took it with him backpacking when he was an Eagle Boy Scout back in the 70's.

Not among my favorites are: Chester A. Reed's *Pocket Field Bird Guide*, Stan Tekiel's *Birds of Florida Field Guide*, Roger Tory Peterson's *Eastern Birds*, The Audubon Society *Field Guide to North American Birds* and the more recently published *Birds of North America* by Ken Kaufman. Of course, my bookcase is laden with big books and among them Thomas A. Imhof's *Alabama Birds* gets constant use. Now out of print, Imhof's book is thorough and filled with useful information.

Not a field guide, but a fun read

is *The Human Nature of Birds* by Theodore Xenophon Barber. If you are a word person you'll enjoy the recently published *The Verb 'To Bird'* by Peter Cashwell. There's a copy in the Fairhope library.

A Field Guide to Little Known and Seldom Seen Birds by Ben, Cathryn, and John Sill is good for laughs. On page 45 of this little book of humor is my favorite bird, the Eastern Spider Spitter! I need a new bookcase to hold my bird books! I gladly loan them and invite margin scribbles. Whether you're traveling to Nova Scotia or Oman, or Paraguay, I probably have a book you can use.



Continued from page 1

College. So come relax and learn about birds at the Gatra Wehle Nature Center for what should be a great day!

The Gatra Wehle Nature Center's surroundings allow visitors to experience numerous wildlife and diverse plant communities representative of the lower Coastal Plain. This event has been planned to coincide with Spring migration thereby increasing chances of observing many different species of birds within a short time. Binoculars are suggested. Special accommodations are available for individuals with disabilities. Bathroom facilities are also available. For more information call Historic Blakeley State Park at (251) 626-0798 or the Alabama State Lands Division at 1-800-LAND-ALA.

State Wildlife Grant: Protecting Birds in Your Community

You know that the U.S. Congress allots funding each and every year for bird, wildlife and habitat conservation programs in this country, but do you know who is responsible for implementing those programs? That's right—your state! Your state's Fish & Game Agency or Department of Natural Resource is responsible for implementing plans and management strategies for effective wildlife conservation and restoration efforts. But effective implementation depends on Congress providing consistent and adequate funding to the states. And one way Congress does so is through the State Wildlife Grant program.

State Wildlife Grant funds provide states with the resources they critically need for effective bird and wildlife conservation and restoration efforts. All 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Samoa and the Virgin Islands use these funds in a variety of creative and cost-effective ways to stop the decline of species, including programs identifying Important Bird Areas, and fighting invasive species—non-native species that pose significant threats to critical habitat and native species. But the need to protect many species has never been greater. For decades, federal funding has focused primarily on conservation of important game species—those species hunted or fished by millions of sportsmen and women across America—and those programs have been enormously successful. At the

same time, the population of many non-game species—those species that are not hunted or fished, has fallen dramatically over the past 30 years due in large part to a lack of resources to conserve these species prior to their decline—specifically many bird species such as the Cerulean Warbler and the Grasshopper Sparrow. The amount of federal dollars now needed to protect and/or restore the populations of these birds is far greater than would have been required to prevent their decline in the first place. Furthermore, thousands of species will continue to decline in the future unless resources are provided for proactive efforts before they reach the endangered status.

The State Wildlife Grant program can help conserve and restore species throughout our country, but only if Congress funds it at a sufficient level. After all, conservation actions taken now to prevent a species from becoming endangered will save significant federal taxpayer dollars that would have to go into species recovery later! **Now is the time to encourage your lawmakers to support the State Wildlife Grant program at the highest funding levels possible for FY05.**

Senator Jeff Sessions
495 Russell Senate Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4124
Senator Richard Shelby
110 Hart Senate Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-5744
The Honorable Jo Bonner
315 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-4931

Field Trip to Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge

January 24, 2004

by Eleanor Livaudais

If you were there, you know it was a beautiful day at Bon Secour. If you did not make it, then you should really try to come next time. The weather report probably kept many of you away, but sometimes you have to take chances. This turned out to be one of those times. There were about fifteen of us as we started down the Pine Beach Trail. This was the first Audubon field trip for several members of the group. There were a father and his son who were able to point out and identify all of the birds we spotted, and even tell us about birds that we didn't see. This young boy's knowledge was invaluable, and his enthusiasm was felt by all of us. More than once, he and his father were called upon to answer questions about the identity of a bird. We hope to see them on some more Audubon field trips. They were great!

Also, with us that day was a gentleman who was a member of the Friends of the Reserve. He was very familiar with the trail, walking it everyday. He was able to show us some interesting side trails to ponds where we might see snakes, alligators, and ducks. Unfortunately, none were there today. We were very fortunate to have these members with us today.

Back on the main trail again, we came to another pond where there were some Grebes and Common Mergansers diving. As we were coming closer to the edge of the pond to get a better look at the Grebes, we heard chipping coming from the underbrush. Our

new young friend, was able to identify this behavior as that of a Swamp Sparrow. He and several others caught a glimpse of this elusive bird as it flitted around in the underbrush. I did not see it.

Our next stop was at the edge of Little Lagoon. Here we treated to flocks of Sanderlings dipping and soaring in graceful patterns as they searched for the best spot to feed. Also, on the water were two Loons, Common Mergansers, a Great Blue Heron, and a couple of Snowy Egrets.

We left the Lagoon and headed for the dunes. This was a real test of our endurance. The trail was over several sand dunes. Here the terrain changed dramatically. We had been in bogs and pine lands. The vegetation was scrubby oaks and wind blown pines and shrubs. We did not see any animals and very few birds, mainly the backyard variety.

Eventually, we reached the paved road. Then we had a quarter mile hike back to the parking lot. By the time the last ones got there, it had been decided that we all would treat ourselves to lunch. Almost everyone came.

I can safely say that not only did we have a wonderful field trip because of all of the birds we saw, but most of all, because of meeting new people, exchanging information and ideas, and making new friends. That is what makes these field trips one of the best things we can do for ourselves and others. Please join us next month and see for yourselves.



Field Trip to Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Mississippi

February 21, 2004

by Eleanor Livaudais



David Ruple, Reserve Manager



We had a wonderful time once we reached our destination. The Reserve was not exactly on the beaten path. So, despite a little confusion over meeting spots, and a wrong turn or two, we drove right up to the front door. Reserve Manager, Dave Ruple was standing on the deck waiting to greet us. Dave was the speaker at our previous Audubon meeting and had given an excellent power point presentation on the Reserve to prepare us for this visit.

After we had gathered in the conference room, Dave gave us an overview of the Reserve. We were able to look at maps to get a better idea of where we were, and where the Reserve was situated. It was west of the Al/Miss state line and south of Moss Point and east of Pascagoula and north of the Mississippi Sound. We were also shown a mock-up of the buildings as they will be when this project is completed. Dave also explained that the purpose of the Reserve was to educate public officials and land owners of the importance of this diverse resource. It is so diverse that it is listed as “one of The Nature Conservancy’s Last Great Places on Earth”. He explained that the Mission of the Reserve was to provide decision makers and law makers with information to increase awareness of the importance of resource management that will benefit all who use the Reserve. This includes commercial fishermen as well as sports fishermen, and land owners. In other words, this

Reserve is in no way to be confused with a “nature center” where groups of school children come for educational field trips. The focus here is mainly on research that will be of great benefit to industry.

We drove to Bayou Heron next, where we looked out at great expanses of salt marsh interspersed with areas where trees were growing. Dave explained that these areas were Indian middens or shell mounds, or in other words, they were refuse areas. Artifacts have been found there and archaeologists say the area is over 4,000 years old.

Before leaving, we hiked a short trail through a bottomland to a place where oak trees were growing. Dave explained that it was an old homestead. Fire had been used in farming the area, but the oak trees were surrounding the house and were protected from the fires.

We did not see many birds at all, but Dave said that there was very big fallout during migration last Spring. Sounds like we should plan to go back next Spring. Right now a lot of work is being done to catalogue all of the plants and animals on the Reserve. By next year they will have bird lists and plant guides completed. It was interesting to see another Reserve just beginning to be established. It was *deja -vu a la Weeks Bay*.

As always, new people and new places mean a fun time was had by all.

Interesting Spring Sightings

(March-May, 2003)

The following spring sightings were reported by Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan from the December, 2003 issue of *Alabama Birdlife*, the journal of the Alabama Ornithological Society.

American White Pelican – Two were locally rare so late at Orange Beach, Baldwin, 31 May (Ross Primrose, Love Primrose.).

Plegadis sp. – At least 10 probable Glossy Ibises were at Blakeley Island, Mobile, 18 April (Jody Brown), a good number.

Swallow-Tailed Kite – One was observed carrying nesting material along the Tensaw River between Globe and Little Bear creeks, Baldwin, 21 March (Keith Gauldin) (nesting activity rarely documented).

Mississippi Kite – A single on Dauphin Island, Mobile, 19 March (Carolyn Henning) set a new early arrival record for Alabama.

American Oystercatcher – Three were at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 20 April (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton), a good number for this side of Mobile Bay.

Baird's Sandpiper – A single was rare in spring and early at Pinto Pass, Mobile, 1 April (Mike Resch).

Jaeger Sp. – J. Stowe sighted one bird at Gulf Shores, Baldwin, 29 April (rare).

Sandwich Tern – Two were early at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow).

Common Tern – Eight were at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 18 March

(Bob Duncan, Luncy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow).

Least Tern – Carolyn Henning found an early bird at Dauphin Island, Mobile, 19 March.

White-Winged Dove – Twelve were noted on Dauphin Island, Mobile, 25 March (Chris Price).

Common Ground-Dove – A new maximum spring count (9) for the Gulf Coast of Alabama was made at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 1 April (Larry Gardella).

Chimney Swift – One was early at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 13 March (Carolyn Henning).

Buff-Bellied Hummingbird – A single at Gulf Shores, Baldwin, 9 March was the 15th for Alabama (Fred Bassett, Kate Wheate, David Dortch).

Eastern Kingbird – One was early at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 17 March (Carolyn Henning).

Gray Kingbird – This species is now rare on the Gulf Coast. A record of a single came from Dauphin Island, Mobile, 25 April (David Dortch).

White-Eyed Vireo – Six at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan et al.) was a good number so early in the season.

Red-Eyed Vireo – Two arrived early at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

Black-Whiskered Vireo – Two early individuals were banded 4 April and 7 April at Fort Morgan, Baldwin (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett)

Cave Swallow – A single at the Dauphin Island Airport, Mobile, 18-22 April (Larry Gardella,

Alison Glascock, Charles Glascock).

Barn Swallow – Larry Gardella's observation of singles at Fort Morgan, Baldwin and the Dauphin Island Causeway, Mobile, both 1 March, set a new early arrival date for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

Hermit Thrush – One spotted at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 4 May (Michael Jordan) set a late record for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

Sprague's Pipit – An individual seen and heard at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 29 March (Barry Fleming; @ABRC0 set the 17th record for Alabama.

Brewster's Warbler – Rare in Alabama, one was recorded on Dauphin Island, Mobile, 13 April (Jud Johnston, Jared Caudle).

Worm-Eating Warbler – The 157 banded at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 4-18 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett) was a good number, with 52 on 13 April and 38 on 14 April.

Ovenbird – The 37 banded at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 9 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett) was a maximum spring number for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

Kentucky Warbler – The 55 banded at Fort Morgan, Baldwin, 13 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett) was a maximum spring number for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

Shiny Cowbird – A male and a female found on Dauphin Island, Mobile, 10 May (Ben Garmon; @ABRC) set the 21st record for Alabama.

Film Week

Kudos to all who helped to make Film Week a big success. Tom Sterling was well received in each school as he presented reels of the film, *In Search of the Albino* to the students.

We appreciate Lloyd Scott coordinating the public school programs and John Borom who sets up the show in Fairhope. Dinner hosts were Laurie and Charlie Bailey, Nadine and Raymond Lovell and John Winn. A special thank you to Don and Carol Flack who open their home to Tom.

The film was shown to students at Mobile Christian, Burns Middle School, Clark Magnet School, Robertsdale Elementary School, Dodge Elementary School, UMS Wright's High School, Maryvale Elementary School, Government Street Baptist Church School and Vigor High School.

We could not undertake such an ambitious program without the help of our co-sponsors. Thank you Degussa, Ciba Specialty, Dupont DeNemours and John and Bev Winn for your financial help.

The film was shown Tuesday night January 27 at Faulkner State Community College and on Thursday night January 29th at Government Street Baptist Church. Those who missed seeing the film missed an excellent, entertaining and informative program.

It takes a lot of planning and a lot of time to put the program together but when you hear a student say, "That was neat," it all becomes worthwhile.

Elizabeth Williams
Film Chairman

Winter Birds Finally Arrive

By Celeste Hinds

Goldfinches, *Canduelis tristis*, were tardy at my feeders this year. They usually arrive right after Thanksgiving and begin pigging out on thistle feeders. Not this year! Only a few appeared in December, however, they descended in full force the second week in February and continue to run up my birdseed budget.

In fact all birds were scarce in my part of Baldwin County this winter. The usual flock of Yellow Rumped Warblers, *Dendroica coronata*, have not shown up. A few dart through the trees near our pond, but not in numbers like previous years.

Even woodpeckers and small cavity nesters like chickadees and titmice are fewer in number. I hope this isn't due to urban sprawl clearing so many old growth trees where nesting holes were plentiful.

Many theories abound. Per-

haps all the rains this past summer increased the food supply in the woods. Maybe the West Nile Virus took its toll. Cold weather was late in some parts of the north so some birds might have waited longer to fly south.

An article in a sportsman magazine gave what appears to be a logical reason for the duck population reduction in recent years. The author said changes in crop production caused ducks to remain north longer. Farming methods now use the small trench planting method, rather than plowing entire fields, thus ducks and ground feeders food supply is greater than is previous years in those huge farmlands.

I would appreciate hearing from you if you have other theories. Email me at Hindsite@att.net.

Jan-Feb General Meetings

Pictured at left is Eric Soehren, terrestrial zoologist, Natural Heritage Section, State Land Division, ADCNR. Mr. Soehren gave an excellent presentation at the January meeting concerning "The Challenges of Bird Migration." It was thought provoking and well presented.

Our February general meeting speaker was Dave Ruple, Reserve Manager, Mississippi Department of Marine Resource, who was also our guide on the February field trip to the Reserve.

We sincerely thank both these gentlemen for their contribution to our chapter.





New Members



Welcome to the Mobile Bay Audubon Society, the local chapter of the National Audubon Society. We thank you for your support. A few facts about our chapter: Monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday from September thru May at 7:30 PM alternately in Fairhope and Mobile (See calendar for details of programs and locations.) Programs of interest are planned for each meeting and field trips are scheduled regularly. We are a non-profit organization—all donations are tax deductible. A list of officers is listed in the newsletter; feel free to call any of them for information. Join us as often as you can—we want to get to know you.

Ottilie Halstead, Membership Chairman

Life Member

Erin Wheeler

Daphne

Glenda Bertagnolli

Colleen Hatchett

David E Chalk

Sue Crane

Thomas P Rosandich

Fairhope

Sharon Spielman

Foley

Vivia Riebeli

Grand Bay

Betsy Ross

Irvington

M B Curtis

Lillian

Nancy Hill

Magnolia Springs

John C Shaw

Mobile

Beverly Alexander

Jack Buttridge

Peggy D Davis

Joseph P Thomas, MD

Ms Kimble Walch

Corinnne G Darawich

Amaline Brunson

S G Drinkard

Shawn T Elsey

Judy Miller

Mary E Perry

W H Sierke Jr.

Silverhill

Kim Williams



Note about Minnie Nonkes

By Celeste Hinds

Minnie continues to stronger and will probab back with the Audubon group before long. Alth she still has her apartme Homestead in Fairhope, is in the Homestead assi living Huntington unit, 6 for the time being. Sh no phone in her room b enjoys visits and cards. mailing address remains same.

Thanks to all who h kept in contact with her.

In Memoriam

Minnie Laura Hunter

Charter Member of

Mobile Bay Audubon Society

Minnie Laura Hunter became a charter member of our local chapter when the Mobile Birding Association (circa 1950-1960's) designed and created a bird sanctuary on Dauphin Island under the auspices of the National Audubon Society. Forming the chapter was a requirements for National Audubon Society assumption. Laura was an active birder and life-long friend of animals and the environment.

The circle of life became complete for Laura in early November at the age of 94.

She was the mother of Jacquelyn Chastain, who also was a charter member of Mobile Bay Audubon Society.

Our love and prayers go out to the family.



National Audubon Society

Birdathon 2004

'Tis the season once again, *Birdathon* season! A time when tiny creatures fly through the air, singing songs as they move in their spring migration. Birdathoners will be fanning out across the country counting each species. We'll be joining with them in Mobile.

- WHAT:** Birdathon—Birding for fun and funds
WHEN: Any 24 hour period this spring
WHERE: Any place you find birds. Dauphin Island & Fort Morgan are prime birding spots.

If you'd like the help of an expert on Dauphin Island, call John Porter, 861-2120

For many years people have been strolling, walking and running for worthy causes. We count birds!

Our Birdathon funds are used to place Audubon Adventures in 4th and 5th grade classrooms. Audubon Adventures is a complete science curriculum. The goal of Audubon Adventures is connecting students to nature.

Again this year we are asking each member to participate in this worthwhile endeavor. Think what we could do if each member gave \$10.00. A \$235.00 donation will provide a one year subscription to Audubon Adventures for a classroom. "Saving habitat by educating children."

To be a participant in the 2004 Birdathon, here's what you do:

Be a Counter: Join a Birdathon group and count species during any 24 hour period. Get sponsors to make pledges for each species you count.

Be a Sponsor: Pledge any amount. . . \$.10, .25, .50, \$1.00 per species reported or give a flat amount. Your contribution is tax deductible.



Many thanks

Elizabeth Williams
Birdathon Coordinator



Please use the enclosed envelope for your contribution.
Clip and mail to: MBAS, P O Box 483, Fairhope, AL 36522

I want to be a part of this fun/fund raising worthwhile program:

____ As a counter

____ As a sponsor. No donation is too large, no contribution too small.

____ Giving a one time gift, amount enclosed _____.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____



Threat of Cats

From *The 500 Most Important Bird Areas in the United States* © 2003

By American Bird Conservancy

There are estimated to be more than 70 million pet cats in the United States, at least one in every three American households. Polls show that approximately two-thirds of these cats roam free part or all of the time. In addition, there are estimated to be up to 100 million additional domestic cats that are either stray or feral. All cats kill wildlife. In a recent study in Wichita, Kansas, all of 42 cats observed killed birds, and a declawed cat killed the most! A 1998 study estimated the typical cat allowed to roam outdoors kills 40 animals per year, and the other studies suggest some cats kill 80 or more per year. No matter which numbers one uses, at a minimum, hundreds of

millions of birds are killed by cats each year. A Wisconsin study published in 1995 estimated that cats kill as many as a million birds per year in that one state!

A well-fed, inoculated and disease-free, well-rested, free-roaming cat is a superpredator, subject to few of the limiting factors of native predators, and able to increase at rates far in excess of natural, wild mammal reproduction. Domestic cats are not a natural part of our ecosystem; they compete with native predators and spread diseases to them. Cats are documented to have killed at least ten endangered species ranging from the Piping Plover to the California Gnatcatcher. Introduced cats have an even greater impact on islands where birds have evolved in isolation from predators. Approximately 40 bird species have become extinct due to cat

predation on islands, and on Marion Island in the Indian Ocean, cats killed 450,000 seabirds annually prior to eradication efforts. As continental habitats become increasingly fragmented into "habitat islands," the effect of cats is to sterilize these places of ground and low-shrub nesting species.

Cats are genetically programmed for this killing behavior and are not to blame. This slaughter of birds is the result of human ignorance and indifference. Solutions include a nationwide campaign to remove cats from all areas important to or set aside for wildlife and an education campaign to convince pet owners to keep their animals indoors. For more information, see American Bird Conservancy's website, www.abcbirds.org.



Newsletter Deadline

Any member is welcomed and encouraged to submit articles for the newsletter. I would be happy to include anything you think would be of interest to the membership.

Please send your articles for the March/April issue to Delane Small by April 23.

Address:

1 Fiesta Drive

Spanish Fort, AL 36527

Email: dhs9700@bellsouth.net

Calendar

MARCH

- 9 Board Meeting 6:30pm
General Meeting 7:30pm. "The Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas—Fun, Science and Conservation," presented by **Rick West**. Faulkner State Community College Fairhope Campus, Centennial Hall. To learn more about the breeding bird atlas project log on to www.bham.net/aos/bba.
- 27 Field Trip to Forever Wild Splinter Hill Bog to observe wildflower and birds. Meet at the Perdido-Rabun exit of I-65 at 9:00 a.m. at the service station on the west side of the exit. A naturalist from the Alabama Department of Conservation, State Lands Division will be our guide.

APRIL

- 3-17 Hummer Bird Study Group spring banding at Fort Morgan. A flood of neotropical migrants in their finest breeding plumage! For more information, call **Bob Sargent** at 204-681-2888.
- 13 Board Meeting 6:30pm
General Meeting 7:30pm. "Watersheds and Water Quality" presented by **Jody Scanlan**, environmental extension assistant. Auburn Marine Extension and Research Center. Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile. 7:30 p.m.
- 15-18 The Great Louisiana BirdFest, an event of the Northlake Nature Center, Mandeville, Louisiana. For more information log on to www.northlakenature.org/BirdFest2004.
- 18 Bay Area Earth Day—14th Annual Bay Area Earth Day at the Fairhope Pier and Park, noon till 4:00 p.m. Mobile Bay Audubon Society will be among the exhibitors.
- 16-18 Alabama Ornithological Society spring meeting at Dauphin Island, 6:00 a.m. Friday until noon Sunday. For more information, call **John Porter** at 251-861-2120.

MAY

- 11 General Meeting 7:30pm
Regular Meeting 7:30pm. "All You Ever Wanted to Know About Hummingbirds but Didn't Know Who to Ask," presented by **Fred Bassett**, a Master Bird bander with the Hummer Bird Study Group. Faulkner State Community College Fairhope Campus, Centennial Hall. 7:30 p.m.
- 14 Field trip to Gaillard Island in Mobile Bay to observe nesting Brown Pelicans as well as gulls and terns. Meet at Beachcomber Dry Dock and Marine Supply at Dog River in Mobile County. Going south take the first left at Dog River Bridge. There will be a \$15 per person fee. Limit 20 people. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. For reservations call **John Borom** at 251-990-0423.
- 15 Annual Picnic, Blakely Park—Bring your own picnic and we will meet at the picnic area at Blakeley. There will be an exhibit at the Wehle Nature Center about birds from 10:00-2:00. We can enjoy the exhibit, explore the birding trails and enjoy the fellowship. There is a \$3.00/per person admission charge to the park.



Protecting Migratory Songbirds

Want to help make sure that many of those beautiful songbirds that visit your backyard do so each and every year? Well, one way you can is to encourage your Members of Congress to fully fund—and reauthorize—the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act—our

nation's only law that focuses on conserving critical habitat of songbirds, including some of the most endangered bird species in North America such as the Kirtland's Warbler, Bicknell's Thrush, Black-capped Vireo, and a species of great concern, the Cerulean Warbler.

Mobile Bay Audubon Wants You! Join Us Today!

Every membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect birds, wildlife and natural habitats.

As a member, you'll become an important part of our dynamic chapter and receive a host of benefits including:

- ◆ A 1-year subscription (6 bi-monthly issues) of our chapter newsletter.
- ◆ Automatic membership in National Audubon Society, and a 1-year subscription (4 issues, one per quarter) of Audubon, its award-winning magazine;
- ◆ Admission to Audubon Centers across the country
- ◆ A 10% discount on products at select Audubon Nature Stores, and more!

Yes! I want to join Mobile Bay Audubon and National Audubon Society!

\$20 – 1 year Introductory Rate

\$15 – 1 year Student/Senior Rate

\$30 – 2 year Special Rate

My check is enclosed.

\$1,000 – Individual Life Membership

\$1,500 – Dual Life Membership

Please bill me.

Name:

Address:

City/ST/Zip:

Telephone:

Make check payable to National Audubon Society and Mail to: National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center, P.O.Box 52529, Boulder, CO 80322-2529

ChapterCode: A01
7XCH

“Animals give me more pleasure through the viewfinder of a camera than they ever did in the crosshairs of a gunsight. And after I've finished 'shooting,' my unharmed victims are still around for others to enjoy. I have developed a deep respect for animals. I consider them fellow living creatures with certain rights that should not be violated any more than those of humans.”

Jimmy Stewart

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