



JANUARY 2018
No. 378

Ecobon

The Hilton Head Island Audubon Society is a Chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.

JANUARY PROGRAM by: *Alan Biggs, Program Director*

Thursday, January 11, 2018 3:00 - 4:15 pm at Palmetto Electric Cooperative's Community Room on 111 Mathews Drive, Hilton Head Island, (Community Room entrance and parking is at the back of the building)

"Sparrow Identification"

by *Diane Churchill*

Diana Churchill grew up in Savannah and developed an early love of the beaches, marsh, tidal creeks, and birds of the Low Country. She attended Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida where she majored in Spanish. She took one formal class in ornithology and spent a month riding around the state of Florida watching birds. After graduating from the Boulder School of Massage Therapy, Diana moved to Massachusetts where she had a private massage practice for 17 years. There, she joined the Brookline Bird Club and got seriously hooked on birds - particularly the spring migration of songbirds. She got her bird education in the field, attending walks led by expert birders.



In 1997, Diana embarked on a 4-month mid-life adventure, traveling around Australia watching and photographing birds. This led, indirectly, to her return to Savannah in 1998, where she began working at Wild Birds Unlimited in February 1999. In 2001, she started writing "Birder's Eye View" for the Savannah Morning News. She has twice served as President of Ogeechee Audubon, and has led birding and natural history programs for Audubon, Georgia Ornithological Society, and Wilderness Southeast.

Non-Audubon members are welcome, but seating is limited. Call 843-592-7968 or visit <http://hiltonheadaudubon.org/> for additional information.

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Upcoming Audubon Programs: Our program team has scheduled some interesting programs covering a range of topics. Below is the program schedule as it currently stands. Please note that the April meeting is one week later to avoid Heritage Week.

Feb. 8th - Roy Thimineur – Australian Birds and other Wildlife

March 8th - Daniel J. Prohaska – Development Officer, Center for Birds of Prey

April 19th - (NOTE DATE CHANGE!) – Nancy Owen – Creatures of the Night

May 10th - Annual Picnic at Waddell Mariculture Center

HHI Audubon

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The *Ecobon* is a monthly publication (September through May) of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society. Subscription is a benefit of membership. Direct inquiries to: P.O. Box 6185, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938 or email one of the above officers or chairpersons or send a general email to hhiadubon@gmail.com



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Robert Rommel*

Taking Birds to the next level

I hope everyone had a wonderful time at this year's Christmas Bird Count. As 2018 begins some of you may want to get involved in more activities that revolve around birds. There is a huge range of activities and organizations that you can participate in. As an Audubon chapter, we encourage everyone to look at the programs and activities organized by South Carolina as well as the National Audubon Society. Both have separate events and preserves which they manage. More information can be found on their websites (sc.audubon.org and www.audubon.org). National Audubon also has a separate membership from your chapter membership which includes a subscription to their print magazine.

If you are becoming more serious about your identification skills and want to learn more, I strongly recommend the American Birding Association. This is an organization that is a bit more focused on the ins and outs of identification and listing notable bird sightings around the country. If you have the calling of a "lister" (someone who keeps tracks of all the birds they see), this is probably the organization for you!

Another organization that you might want to consider is the American Ornithologist Society. This is a scientific organization focused around the study of birds, their behavior, ecology, and systematics. Membership is open to everyone and they provide an online subscription to "The Auk" which is the premiere scientific journal about birds in the world. You also can access the full version of the Birds of North America which is an online encyclopedia of our bird species that goes into far greater detail than any guide or other bird book. There is roughly the equivalent of a chapter's worth of information on each species!



There are also a great number of activities that you can take part in. The Great Backyard Bird Count and Project FeederWatch are two counting activities that you can do from your home! eBird has become the online repository for any daily listing you might have from anywhere in the world. If you enter what you've seen there, your list will join millions of other lists to form a very comprehensive database of what birds have been seen, where, and when. Lastly, you may want to take part in the North American Breeding Bird Survey. This is the survey which best helps us track how bird populations are changing in the United States. Participants go out at the height of the breeding season to find all the birds on a given route. The scientific methodology of this survey is more rigorous than the others and they require participants to be able to identify all the breeding birds in your area both by sight AND by sound, so this one is limited to the experts out there. Whether you're an expert or a beginner there a number of great organizations and activities that you can take part in.

I hope your 2018 is filled with feathers!

Robert

RECENT AREA BIRD SIGHTINGS

by Jack Colcolough

Our area is continuing to experience a very late Fall migration even into December and our latest in years due to our warm weather. Most of our Winter songbirds have arrived as well as our Winter ducks but not yet in large numbers.

'Rare' sightings reported this past month in our area were: Snow Goose and Black-chinned Hummingbird in Savannah, Common Elder in Fort Pulaski, Virginia and King Rails and Lincoln, Fox and White-crowned Sparrows all at the Savannah NWR.

'Out-Of-Season' (OOS) species found: Summer Tanager, Wilson's, Black-throated Blue and Prairie Warblers, American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, Least Bittern, Barn Swallow, Painted Bunting, Least Bittern and many Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.



Common Eider



Baltimore Oriole

'Uncommon' species reported were many and included: American Bittern, Baltimore Oriole, Dark-eyed Junco, Redhead (duck), Red-throated Loon, American White Pelican, Rusty Blackbird, Blue-headed Vireo, Orange-crowned Warbler, Red-cockaded and Hairy Woodpeckers, arriving Ruddy Duck, American Avocet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Kestrel, endangered Piping Plover, American Pipit, Wild Turkey, Glossy Ibis, Stilt Sandpiper, Sedge and House Wrens, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Wild Turkey, Greater and Lesser Scaups, Loggerhead Shrike, Nelson's, Seaside, Vesper and Field Sparrows, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Long-billed Dowitcher.

Other notables, 'Good Finds' or 'First-Of-The-Season' species reported included:

American Goldfinch, Wilson's Snipe, Cedar Waxwing, Eastern Phoebe, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-throated, Song and Swamp Sparrows, Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hooded Merganser, Bufflehead, Sora, Bonaparte's Gull, Common Loon, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot and nesting Bald Eagles.

Many thanks to all reporting your bird sightings: Jane/Abe Hester, Pauline Jones, Dottie Bass, Carol Clemens, Fran/Denny Baer, Alan Biggs, Roger/ Shelia Johnson, Dottie Bass, Carlos Chacon, Kathy/Grant Greiger, Cindy/Ken Groff, Carol Tunnicliffe, Annette Hausman, Susan Murphy, Diana Churchill, Steve Calver, Russ Wigh, Chris Marsh, Dorothy Mosier, Buddy Campbell, Mary Alice Tartler, Dick Phillips, Bob Speare and many visitors.

To report a bird sighting that is Accidental, Rare, Out-Of-Season, Uncommon, First-Of-The-Year (FOTY) or First-Of-The-Season(FOTS) or a species that you consider to be a "Good Find" e-mail: BirdingFriends@yahoo.com or call 843-432-2661. Please state your full name, the bird species sighted, date and location of your sighting and other pertinent information. Keep up the good work of reporting your bird finds on Birding Friends.

Our Winter birds are here and it's a great time to bird and find them!



Wilson's Warbler

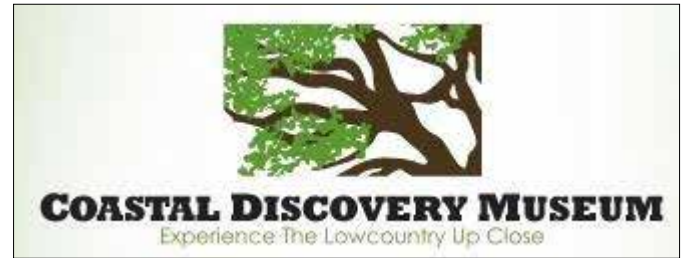
Birding Programs offered at the Coastal Discovery Museum

During the winter months, the Coastal Discovery Museum is offering a series of programs of interest to birders. The programs are normally offered on Wednesday afternoons at 3:00 PM.

Each program requires **ADVANCE REGISTRATION** and a \$7 FEE. These programs fill up so don't delay!

Programs include:

- Lowcountry Owls: January 3rd (Live owls!)
- Bald Eagles in South Carolina: Jan.10th
- Wintering Golden Eagles in South Carolina: January 17th
- Shore Bird Migration: January 24th
- Wood Storks: January 31st
- Brown Pelican Ecology: February 7th
- Protecting our Nation's Birds: February 14th



Visit the museum's website for details and to register. <https://www.coastaldiscovery.org/home/discover-and-learn/discovery-lecture-series/> You **MUST** make a reservation and pay to attend.

From The Week Magazine.....

Police in Georgia have identified the culprit behind a recent wave of vandalized side-view car mirrors: a pileated woodpecker. When more than a dozen drivers in Snellville, GA had their side mirrors smashed, suspicion initially fell on local kids. Police sent out extra patrols to the neighborhood.

But then a local resident spotted the woodpecker furiously tapping at her car mirror, apparently because it mistook its reflection for a rival bird. "We suspect this case is solved," police said.



by Carol Clemments

Birding 101

January 6, 13, 20 and 27
9:30 am to 11:30 am

Coastal Discovery Museum in
the Sea Island Room.

Learn about the birds you
see on your island.

Identifying Birds

Feeding Birds

Shorebirds

Backyard Birds

Raptors and more

If interested contact
greider38@gmail.com

Free for members
\$5 Cost for non-members
per week

LONGLEAF PINE PROJECT

by Rita Kernan

At a recent volunteer workday to help restore the Audubon Newhall Preserve from the ravages of Hurricane Matthew, Joe Kernan got the inspired idea to plant longleaf pine seedlings in the vacant field just inside the entrance gate and seen by passing cars. Post-Hurricane Matthew timber removal contractors created this vast void for use as a staging area for their heavy equipment and for the stacking of downed trees--good and bad.

Rita Kernan, the Preserve's co-chairman for plants and guided walks, coordinated Joe's proposal with the chairman of the Preserve, Bob Clemens, and with Audubon's board president, Robert Rommel, who thought it a "fantastic idea." Robert provided his expert advice in support of the project; Bob related his experience with a Boy Scout project. Rita also contacted Matt Mattoon, co-chairman of the Preserve for foliage management, knowing that this project could not go forward without his skill and labor in the actual plantings of the longleaf pine seedlings.

In the meantime, Joe searched the internet to find another seedling supplier, since the nursery recommended by the SC Forestry Commission was sold out. In fact, all South Carolina and Georgia nurseries were sold out of longleaf pine seedlings! Finally, Joe convinced the Whitfield Farms and Nursery of Twin City, GA, to agree to sell him 200 quality, containerized seedlings for "such a fine Hilton Head Audubon environmental endeavor." The cost was 25 cents a plant plus shipping. (By the way, Pauline, Joe says this is on him, the big sport.)

Within two days, the plants were delivered by UPS, and Matt and Joe went to work on Dec. 6 using a wonderful tool called a "dibble," two of which were loaned to us by Spring Island's naturalist, Dr. Chris Marsh. They were able to get 150 seedlings into the ground before the rains came at noon. Later on, Matt returned and planted the remaining seedlings on the other side of the entrance road as recommended by Tom Hennessey, the Preserve's co-chair for special projects such as the fuel break.



These one-year old planted seedlings will remain in the "grass stage" while a sufficient root system is being established which can take another year to four years depending upon sunlight and rain. After that they will spring up in the "rocket stage," growing very rapidly.

You might ask why the longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) was chosen over faster-growing southern pines such as the loblolly. The reason is longleaf pine forests are one of the most endangered ecosystems in the U.S. as a result of overharvesting by the lumber industry and land-use changes. (Please see *The Long Road to Recovery for the Longleaf Pine* at americanforests.org.) Tiny pine seedlings are already poking up throughout the Preserve. To help with the success of the project, we are advised to pull them up from around the longleaf pine seedlings because the loblollies will eventually dominate over the longleaf.

Matthew 13:32 ...And becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.



Membership Report for December 2017

Hi fellow birders!

Please welcome the following new members who have joined us since our December Ecobon was published.

Christine Beal
Quin Fort and Michele Gatens
Aaron Palmieri

Gail Paulik
Linda Schilder

We appreciate the support of our local members! We currently have roughly 200 local members. Remember, dues are paid yearly, based on the quarter in which you last paid. You will get an email reminder the quarter in which it is time for you to renew. Have a membership question? Has your email address changed? Please be sure to contact us with questions or updates.

Your membership team:

Carol Clemens: clemens318@roadrunner.com

Fran Baer: seatwo@roadrunner.com

Remember: You may receive emails from Audubon that come from either of the above addresses and the monthly Ecobon and Field Trip info from hhiadubon@gmail.com
Please be sure you are not blocking any of these three email addresses. Thanks!



Festival Centre at Indigo Park
45 Pembroke Dr., Suite 130
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926
843-802-2010
HiltonHeadWBU@yahoo.com

- Bird Seed, Blends & Suet
- Bird Feeders & Houses
- Mounting Hardware
- Birdbaths & Accessories
- Binoculars & Field Guides
- Nature Books & Gifts

New Ownership / Same Location

Want to join? Need to renew? Please print this form and mail or bring to the next meeting with your dues. To contact us, email: hhiadubon@gmail.com

Local Membership: select either 1 year individual \$15 or 1 year family \$25

I wish to make an extra donation of _____ (amount)

Last Name _____ First Name(s) _____

Address: _____ city _____ State _____ Zip _____

For LOCAL residents, please indicate your plantation/neighborhood such as Sea Pines, Indigo Run, Bluffton, Sun City etc. _____

Preferred phone: _____

Email: _____ (please print clearly!)

Can you help us with any of these activities on an as needed basis? Please check any of interest to you. Audubon Newhall Preserve Help with Field Trips Conservation Education Christmas Bird Count Publicity/Programs other

Please mail to: P.O. Box 6185 – Hilton Head Island, SC – 29938

For committee only: Renewal date _____ new _____ (revised 3/17)
National _____

2017 Christmas Bird Count

We had great coverage this year with an article in the December 2017 Hilton Head Monthly magazine. The article included six pages of spectacular photos by Robert Rommel and Larry Watts. Check it out! In addition, a photographer from Bluffton Today visited Colleton River Plantation on count day and was enthused about what she saw.

We kicked off the Christmas Bird Count with our meeting on December 7th. Robert Rommel gave another fun and informative presentation to an audience of about 100 enthusiastic birders. We had pleasant weather for the count on December 15th. Temperatures reached 60 degrees and skies were partly cloudy. Although I don't have final numbers yet, it looks like our total number of birds is a bit lower than last year, but species numbers are higher. Our number of participants is up this year, back to near the 296 from 2 years ago. More specifics will be available in next month's Ecobon.



The Long Cove Team comparing notes.
Photo by Karen Migliaccio



Red-shouldered Hawk in an interesting pose with toes.
Photo by Jerry Griffin

A few of the stories:

A flock of Sandhill Cranes was seen flying over Port Royal Plantation and Palmetto Bluff. Because our teams always note the time and location of "high flyers," we were able to determine that there were two separate flocks!

A possible "escapee" Black Swan was seen at Palmetto Bluff. Team member Aaron Palmieri is trying to find out where it came from, possibly Swan Lake Iris Gardens in Sumter.

One of our Area Captains, Shelia Johnson, jumped out of bed at 11:42 pm on count day when she heard a Barred Owl! She opened the window to confirm the call. Just in time - we count until midnight!

We had a record number of Bald Eagle sightings. The review panel worked with each team to eliminate duplicate sightings, but we will still have quite a few more than in past years. Denny Baer, counting by kayak in Palmetto Dunes, saw 5 adult Bald Eagles at one time! The lagoon was lowered for bridge construction, so the odors attracted more Bald Eagles, vultures and wading birds.

Palmetto Bluff had a flock of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks. In just a few years, this species has moved into our area and now they seem to be staying year-round. Bluffton residents report flocks in their backyards.

Thank you to all who participated and to the Area Captains who spend a lot of time and effort organizing and tabulating to make this count happen! Five of our 18 area teams had new captains this year, some temporary, some (hopefully) long-term! Thanks to our panel, Robert Rommel, Jack Colcolough and Pauline Jones, who met with each Captain to discuss and review the reports.

More news next month! Susan Murphy, CBC Coordinator,
HHICBC@gmail.com



Ring-necked Ducks were counted by 3 teams.
Photo by Jerry Griffin



Bald Eagle at Newhall Preserve.
Photo by Karen Marts

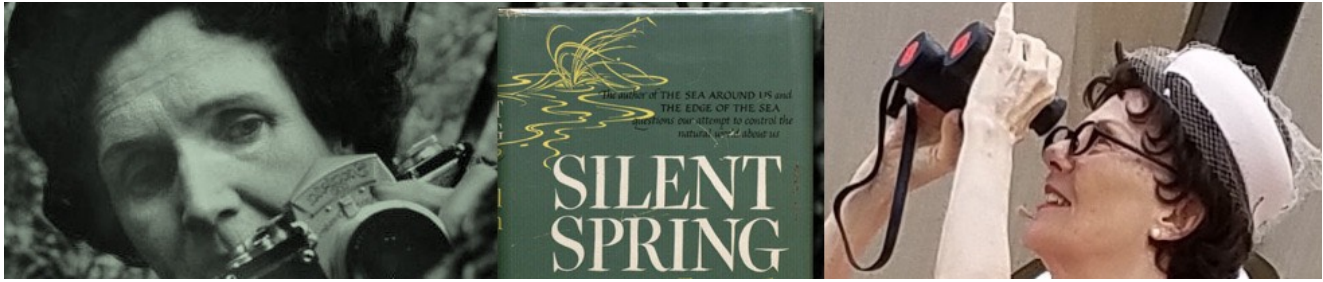


One of the four boat teams heads out.
Photo by Fran Baer

A Special Lowcountry Birding Event

February 12, 2018, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Magnolia Hall in Sun City



Rachel Carson's Silent Spring

a History Alive performance by Caroline McIntyre

Step inside the revolutionary book that changed America, “Silent Spring” as Rachel Carson reveals the reckless destruction of our living world. Written more than 55 years ago, “Silent Spring” inspired the Environmental Movement and has never been out of print. Silent Spring entered the words “ecology”, “reverence for life” and “balance of nature” into our common language. It inspired a nation to proclaim “our fundamental right to a healthy environment.” It etched on our national consciousness the Jean Rostand words: “The obligation to endure, gives us the right to know.”

Caroline McIntyre will appear as Rachel Carson and speak in Carson’s profound, prophetic and poetic words. It is a powerfully uplifting glimpse of a personal struggle, witness for nature and ground -breaking crusade against the reckless pollution of our living world. The audience will be able to question and dialog with this expert on the work of Rachel Carson and share their own experiences.

Caroline has performed as an historical interpreter since 2006. A former historyteacher, theater manager and corporate presenter, she holds BA and MA degrees in American Studies. She recreates the roles of three of her personal heroes - Frances Perkins, first female presidential cabinet member, Rachel Carson and Mary Draper Ingles, SW Virginia frontierswoman captured by Shawnee Indians. She likes to point out that one word describes all three - fearless!



- Program; Monday, February 12th 2:00 to 4:00 PM – Sponsor Displays 1:00 PM.
- This is a no cost event.
- Pre-registration is required.
- [Online registration is available at South Carolina Audubon at www.sc.audubon.org](http://www.sc.audubon.org)

Rachel Carson Quotes

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”

“The human race is challenged more than ever before to demonstrate our mastery - not over nature but of ourselves.”

“The beauty of the living world I was trying to save has always been uppermost in my mind – that and anger at the senseless, brutish things that were being done. I have felt bound by a solemn obligation to do what I could – if I didn’t at least try I could never again be happy in nature.”

Fieldtrip Notes

Hi Everyone,

It sure sounds like a fantastic time was had by all on the last HHI Audubon Field Trip to the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge with Jane Hester and Joel Vos. It looked like it ended up being a nice day weather-wise, and the birds seemed to cooperate very well too.

A great big thanks to Jane for leading the trip, and also to Joel from the refuge for making this happen for us and driving the wagon! What a nice way to enjoy the refuge together. We'll look to do another wagon trip there in the coming months, so tell your friends! Also, thank you to Paul Weatherhead for some nice photos from the day. If you haven't seen them yet, they were posted on the HHI Audubon Face Book page!

See attached for the complete bird list. Please feel free to share with anyone you feel may be interested.

Happy Holidays everyone! Bob Speare

December 2, 2017 Hilton Head Audubon trip to the Savannah National Wildlife refuge with Jane Hester and Joel Vos

Blue-winged Teal	Northern Harrier	Sedge Wren
Northern Shoveler	Cooper's Hawk	Marsh Wren
Ring-necked Duck	Red-shouldered Hawk	Carolina Wren
Ruddy Duck	Red-tailed Hawk	Gray Catbird
Pied-billed Grebe	American Kestrel	Northern Mockingbird
Double-crested Cormorant	Clapper Rail	Common Yellowthroat
Anhinga	American Coot	Palm Warbler
American White Pelican	Common Gallinule	Yellow-Rumped Warbler
American Bittern (8)!!!	Wilson's Snipe	Warbler spp.
Great Blue Heron	Gull spp.	Savannah Sparrow
Great Egret	Belted Kingfisher	Song Sparrow
Snowy Egret	Red-Bellied Woodpecker	Swamp Sparrow
Little Blue Heron	Northern Flicker	Northern Cardinal
Tricolored Heron	Pileated Woodpecker	Red-Winged Blackbird
White Ibis	Eastern Phoebe	Eastern Meadowlark
Glossy Ibis	American Crow	Common Grackle
Turkey Vulture	Carolina Chickadee	Boat-Tailed Grackle



Audubon



Issue #: 378
 Organization: Hilton Head Island Audubon Society
 Frequency: Monthly Sept.-May
 Issue Date: JANUARY 2018
 Title: Ecobon

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938
 P. O. Box 6185
 ECOBON

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JANUARY ~ FEBRUARY 2018 Calendar

JANUARY

- Thurs. Jan. 4 Board Meeting10:00 am
- Thurs. Jan. 11 Monthly Meeting3:00 pm
at Palmetto Electric

FEBRUARY

- Thurs. Feb. 1 Board Meeting10:00 am
- Thurs. Feb. 8 Monthly Meeting3:00 pm
at Palmetto Electric
- Mon. Feb. 12 "Rachel Carson's Silent Spring" 2-4:00 pm
at Magnolia Hall in Sun City

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Monthly meetings of the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society are regularly scheduled at 3:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, September through May. Meetings are held at the Coastal Discovery Museum, 70 Honey Horn Drive. Members and guests welcome!



BEQUESTS

If you wish to honor a family member or friend with a memorial gift, or remember the Audubon Newhall Preserve or the Hilton Head Island Audubon Society in your will, your gift may be in the form of securities, cash, life insurance, real estate, or other property.

Contact your own estate planner or our Audubon Chapter at P.O. Box 6185, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29938.

Sharing your estate with Audubon not only reduces the taxes on your estate but will help protect birds, wildlife, and their habitat in the years to come.