



February 2022

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Update on Strategic Initiatives

Last month we implemented a **revised membership structure** to include more donation levels. In our member survey, members expressed positive support for a tiered membership to expand education and conservation

initiatives, and our membership is following through! We are happy to report that we have received the following donation levels in January.

- two Bald Eagle (\$1,000)
- one Painted Bunting (\$500)
- 17 Great Egret (\$100)

Members and their donation levels will be acknowledged beginning in 2022 in the Hilton Head Audubon annual report (or you may remain anonymous). To renew your membership or make a donation, [click here](#).

In the area of program and content offerings, members wanted more specialized education classes including "going deep" in bird identification and habitat and birding technology. This month we are featuring two presentations on "**Getting Started with eBird**" and "**Identifying Challenging Winter Birds in the Low Country**".

And, in a final note, we are offering for the first time a **stationary bird outing** to be more inclusive for individuals who may be mobility challenged. Our President Kay Grinnell and Lynn Hodgson will be leading this outing at Kay's home in Hilton Head Plantation overlooking the Port Royal Sound.

You can learn more and register for these events in the section below.

UPCOMING EVENTS

PROTECTING BIRDS AND THE PLACES THEY NEED.

JOIN US



Field Trips

To register for field trips, please click on the links.

February 10 Sgt Jasper Park

Leader: Carlos Chacon

[Details and Registration click here.](#)

February 13 Widgeon Point Preserve

Leader: Jack Zadik

[Details and Registration click here.](#)

February 19 Stationary Bird Outing - Home of Kay Grinnell, Hilton Head Plantation

Leader: Kay Grinnell and Lynn Hodgson

[Details and Registration click here.](#)

February 27 Port Royal Cypress Wetlands

Leaders: Jill Moore

[Details and Registration click here](#)

March 30 - April 7 2022 Costa Rica Birding Trip

FOUR SPACES AVAILABLE!

We are thrilled to announce this international birding trip to tropical Costa Rica. With more than 900 species, the tiny Central American country is one of the world's top birding destinations. A group of 10 Lowcountry birders will accompany professional naturalist and expert bird watcher Carlos Chacon through 8 days of exploration at 3 different birding destinations within Costa Rica. Carlos is a native Costa Rican biologist who has lived in the Lowcountry for the last 20 years, where he is the manager of Natural History at the Coastal Discovery Museum and volunteers as field trip coordinator for Hilton Head Audubon. The trip starts in northern Costa Rica in the foothills of the Rincon de la Vieja Volcano, followed by 2 days in the cloud forest at the famous Monteverde Mountains and 2 days exploring the tropical rain forest near the Arenal Volcano. This is an area of high biodiversity that is home to rare species including over 35 species of hummingbirds and 4 species of toucans. Accommodations are in comfortable eco-lodges and transportation is in a private, air-conditioned

microbus. For more information and a detailed itinerary email Carlos at eco1adventures@gmail.com

Events Calendar

Please click on the links for more details

February

Newhall Weekly Bird Walk

Tuesdays @8:30am. No registration required

[For details click here](#)

Getting Started with eBird

Speaker: Sarah Gustafson

Thursday, February 10 @3:00pm via Zoom.

[For details click here](#)

Identifying Challenging Winter Birds of the Low County

Speaker: Chris Marsh

Thursday, February 24 @3:00pm via Zoom.

[For details click here](#)

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

PROTECTING BIRDS AND THE PLACES THEY NEED.

HILTON HEAD AUDUBON IN THE NEWS



The Great Backyard Bird Count

The GBBC is scheduled for February 18 - 21, 2022. This year, we are planning a robust outreach to our local schools encouraging teachers and

students to participate in this international effort.

Our program includes a PowerPoint presentation introducing local birds to students followed by a guided bird walk. We provided participating teachers a color poster advertising this year's GBBC. We arranged to borrow the Coastal Discovery Museum's binoculars and will have our own binocs as well so we have enough to share with the kids. Some schools have good habitats for bird species right on campus and others may want to arrange to meet Audubon volunteers at nearby parks like Newhall Preserve or Jarvis Creek Park. Some teachers may prefer to present the PowerPoint themselves.

We sent a personalized invitation letter to teachers to the six local schools that participated last year as well as those we have worked with so far this year. There are undoubtedly more teachers who would be interested in our program.

We have already arranged presentations and bird walks for Cross School, River Ridge Academy, Heritage Academy & HE McCracken Middle School. Both Hilton Head Prep and Heritage Academy have asked us to come to their schools during the week before the GBBC. We will need volunteers to accommodate these groups during the days around February 18 - 21. If you would like to volunteer please contact Lois Lewis directly at oeblewis@gmail.com.

2021 Christmas Bird Count

Our Christmas Bird Count Report has been approved by the Regional Editor. The final results are available on the [Hilton Head Audubon website](#) or please [click here to view the final report](#)

Ways to Give

Your contributions are crucial to help the Hilton Head Audubon Society

better achieve its mission: To be a leading voice for birds and conservation in the LowCountry, where people and nature thrive together. Hilton Head Audubon board members, committee heads, and volunteers work throughout the year on projects that fulfill our goals.

These activities include: advocacy regarding conservation / birding in our region, providing birding education programs to area schools, maintaining and interpreting through signage and tours the Audubon Newhall Preserve, managing the annual Christmas Bird Count, actively participating in regional Citizen Science programs, and increasing awareness about local conservation projects or concerns. Please note that donations may also be made in honor or memory of a loved one.

[To support Hilton Head Audubon, Donate Now.](#)

AUDUBON NEWHALL PRESERVE

PROTECTING BIRDS AND THE PLACES THEY NEED.

NEWHALL NOTES



Newhall Update

Our Newhall work days will resume in March. If you would like to join, please contact Bob Clemens at rclemens318@gmail.com or text (317) 989-5777 to let him know you'll be there.

Nature walks with Debby Boots at Newhall Preserve will resume on Friday, March 4th, 9:30 a.m. come and discover how this 50-acre maritime forest has been preserved to sustain an amazing diverse wildlife community. We will take an easy hour's stroll around the pond, discussing the medicinal and culinary uses of the native plants. We'll visit our pollinator garden and learn how to add native shrubs and flowers to make your own backyard

more wildlife -friendly. know about the woodwide web. Come and discover the busy city under our feet. Meet at the parking lot.

A guided walk is also available to groups by appointment. Call Debby Boots at 843-715-4220 or email debboots5@gmail.com

Carolina Wren at Newhall courtesy of Chris Marsh



THROUGH OUR BINOCULARS

PROTECTING BIRDS AND THE PLACES THEY NEED.



COMMUNITY SIGHTINGS & STORIES



There are several ways to report sightings and general birding activity: use eBird or join the HHIAS Facebook group or Birding-Friends@google.com.

If you would like to join the Birding-Friends google group please send an email requesting access to ecobon@hiltonheadaudubon.org.

Here is are media collages of January birding activity from the [HHIAS](#)

Eagle Nesting Activity



Winter Visitors and Residents



Field Trip Reports

HHIAS member, Kathy Byrd reported on her field trip experience to the Nemours Plantation:

Today I was privileged to join an Audubon bird walk at the private Nemours Plantation in Yemassee, South Carolina. The plantation covers over 10,000 acres and includes a variety of habitats. We traveled by wagon for over 3 hours. Though it was cloudy, rainy and cold the birds didn't seem to mind, including this American White Pelican and a Greater Yellowlegs. It was a spectacular day and I added 5 species to my birder's life list!



Through our Binoculars has been a beloved section of Ecobon since its inception by Jack Colcolough. Jack relied on his expert network of birders and reports from birding-friends@google to compile the monthly column of birding activity and sightings. Without Jack's personal touch, the concept is now covered by eBird lists, birding-friends@google and the HHIAS Facebook group page.

To keep this column alive, we are seeking a volunteer or volunteers to compile and report for Through Your Binoculars. This would be a great learning opportunity!

COMMUNITY SCIENCE

PROTECTING BIRDS AND THE PLACES THEY NEED.

TURN YOUR PASSION FOR BIRDING INTO SCIENCE



Motus Update

By Bob Speare

Since the Last Motus Update in the November edition of Ecobon, our Hilton Head Island Motus receiver station has been connected to the Motus system and is ready to begin detecting data from passing tagged birds and other animals. With our station pointing directly out to the Atlantic, we are positioned very well to capture data from a number of birds moving up and down our coast during their seasonal migrations.

Having a station connected to the Motus system, means we join about 1300 other stations in an important collaborative effort to learn more about the movements of birds and other animals across the landscape. Any group(s) conducting research with the use of Motus NanoTags has access to data collected from our station to help them connect the dots and form a clear picture of where their research animals have traveled and when. Additionally, we can now access to the data our station collects through the [motus.org](https://www.motus.org) website. It's very easy to access this and I've provided [a quick step-by-step video here](#).

Now that we have an active station up and running, what are some of the next steps for us with Motus?

Well, first and foremost, I'm very excited to see what species are detected by our station, and I'll be sure to provide regular updates.

Another important next step for me is developing educational information for both schools and adults to help people understand the importance of learning about the movements of birds and other animals and the specific locations they visit during these migrations.

Additionally, SC Audubon, who oversees many of the Motus towers in South Carolina, and who also provided funding for our station, is in the process of applying for Motus funding to support more Motus opportunities in South Carolina. It will be important to continue our strong collaboration with SC Audubon as we consider other ways that we may wish to be involved in future Motus projects.

Lastly, I recently gave a presentation at the HH Audubon meeting on January 13. In it, I described some of the ways we've been tracking birds over the years, and some of the technologies that are being used today, including Motus. [A condensed version of this presentation is available by clicking here.](#)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PROTECTING BIRDS AND THE PLACES THEY NEED.

GET INVOLVED



Volunteer with us! Hilton Head Audubon is an all volunteer organization and and relies on the contributions of many passionate and dedicated individuals who help make our mission of promoting the understanding, and conservation of native birds and their habitats possible. People with a range of skills and interests are needed to support our educational programs, activities, and conservation efforts.

If you are interested in volunteering, [explore our website for current opportunities](#) that fit your interest, skills and schedule.