

## Bluebird Nesting Report, Summer 2008



Eastern Bluebird, male

winter we will baffle the rest and move several boxes to better locations.

At the end of March we start a weekly monitoring program which continues through early August. On March 25 there was already nesting material in 5 boxes and completed nests with eggs in 2 more.

To monitor the boxes we knock on the side to rouse the adult birds, or possibly, a snake. (Fortunately, we have never encountered the latter.) Most adult birds will fly out. Then we unscrew the front so it will lift up and we can peek in. We use an automotive mirror to look inside the nest without disturbing it and then record our observations on a form. Sometimes we get dive-bombed by rather assertive adults, which is one reason we wear hats. However, most adults just wait until we leave. We find mostly bluebird nests with some House Wren nests. We will remove a House Sparrow nest but leave all other kinds of nests. We rotate monitoring teams so no one is overworked. Last season's teams were Marie and Bob Dow, Quint and Dirk Simones and Barbara Hughes, Jack Jezorek and Sue Cole.

Six Eastern Bluebirds fledged from the 2 boxes at the Audubon Natural Area. At Lake Daniel, 43 Eastern Bluebirds and 10 House Wrens fledged. We lost 2 bluebird nests with eggs but do not know why.

If this project interests you, call Marie and Bob Dow at 852-6091. ❁



Bluebirds lay 3-5 eggs per clutch.



Recently hatched bluebird nestlings



House Wren's nest

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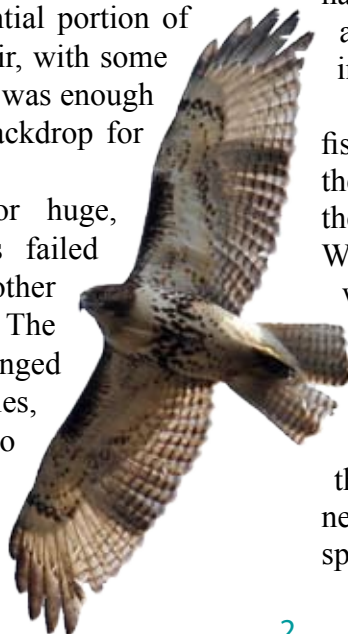
## Field Trip Reports

### Pilot Mountain Hawkwatch

by Gregg Morris

Only a few members attended the joint TGPAS/PBC field trip to Pilot Mountain to observe migrating hawks this year. In this, the 2008 trip was similar to that of the previous year. The weather, though, was rather different. In contrast to 2007, where visibility was essentially zero for a substantial portion of the day, visibility this year was fair, with some haze along the Blue Ridge. There was enough cloud cover to provide a good backdrop for high-flying raptors.

Unfortunately, the hoped-for huge, swirling kettles of Broad-wings failed to appear and neither did most other species, at least in any numbers. The count for the day was 230 Broad-winged Hawks, five Ospreys, two Bald Eagles, two Sharp-shinned Hawks, two Red-shouldered Hawks, one each Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel, and, a nice touch, two



– Red-tailed Hawk by Joby Joseph

Peregrine Falcons, for a total of 245 identified birds.

Phil Dickinson from Forsyth Audubon was the official recorder for the day. Forsyth Audubon sponsors the annual September count at Pilot Mountain, which has at least two purposes: The first of these is citizen science, as daily counts and related data such as temperatures, barometric pressure and wind direction and speed are reported to a national web page affiliated with the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Education is a second purpose. Daily numbers are written on a large dry-erase board, and there is an accompanying display with photographs of several raptor species and other pertinent information. Both draw a lot of interest from casual tourists on Little Pinnacle, and they in turn become the targets of a low-level campaign to impart details on raptors, raptor migration, and raptor conservation. Volunteers are always welcome to help in this effort. Consider joining us next year. ❁

### Kayaking Falls Reservoir

by Craig Lawrence



Craig paddling in the mist by Deirdre Poe

On November 1st, as the morning chill lifted, seven kayaks pushed off into the calm waters of Falls Reservoir. We paddled and drifted our way down the narrow channel, bordered on each side by the bare, ancient rocks of the Uwharries and hillsides colored in yellows, oranges, browns and occasional reds.

As the day warmed, we lunched outside a fisherman's cabin on a small island, and continued to the end of the reservoir at the foot of Narrows Dam. If the 70 degree day made us think of summer, the Winter Wrens and Ruby-crowned Kinglets reminded us that winter was coming.

Our wildlife highlight was a squirrel swimming steadily across the lake, its tail raised like a sail. As it neared the far side, an immature eagle swooped, missed, then attacked again. The squirrel made it to the bank, scampered up a tree, and the eagle landed nearby. We paddled home, leaving behind a very special place. ❁

# Program: "Close Encounters with Wildlife: A Rehabilitator's Story"

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Library, 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Halley Buckanoff



Halley Buckanoff is the director of the Valerie H. Schindler Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Asheboro, on the grounds of the North Carolina Zoo. In addition to her years spent in wildlife rehabilitation, Halley

has experience studying birds in the field, from the breeding biology of Marbled Murrelets to the social behavior of crows and jays.

In her presentation Halley will talk about the goals of wildlife rehabilitation and how we can conserve wildlife in wild places. She will bring a raptor to the meeting, and will share with us the challenges and joys of rehabilitating these marvelous birds. ❀

## Field Trip to White Street Landfill

Saturday, January 10, 2009

The trip leader will make special arrangements for our birding group to enter the White Street Landfill, where in past winters the bird count team has spotted several species of sparrows, raptors, both species of vultures, and other interesting birds. We will meet in the parking lot of the Congregational Church of Christ at 8:30 a.m. to carpool. This is important so that our group's cars will not interfere with the trucks that are regularly at the landfill. We will consolidate further at the parking area of the landfill office. This is a joint trip with the Piedmont Bird Club. Leader: Carolyn Allen, 288-3045, [texallen@aol.com](mailto:texallen@aol.com). ❀

**DON'T FORGET TGPAS' WINTER SEED SALE, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, AT NEW GARDEN NURSERY ON LAWNSDALE DRIVE!**

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## Woodsman, DON'T Spare that Tree!

### Wet Meadow Restoration

Saturday, January 24, 10:30 a.m.

Auduboners are usually tree huggers, but not always. When woody vegetation threatens to eliminate prime wet meadow habitat, then it's time to break out the axes – or pruning shears or bow saws. This is the case at Price Park, where chapter members and other volunteers will gather to continue the battle with invasive vines and woody species that are bent on overtaking the meadow.



This rather rare habitat is used by a number of bird species such as Red-winged Blackbirds, swallows, and various sparrows. Pearson Audubon has worked for the last two years to maintain the wet area below the library as a meadow.

Please join us for a couple hours of clipping and pruning. We'll have extra tools if you don't have your own. Despite the wet meadow description, most of the site is dry. The winter dew may wet the grass, though, so dress accordingly. Call or e-mail Jack with any questions, 272-6664, [suejackj@bellsouth.net](mailto:suejackj@bellsouth.net) ❀

## Field Trip to Greensboro Lakes

Saturday, January 31, 9:00 a.m.

TGPAS will join the Piedmont Bird Club to view waterfowl on Greensboro area lakes. Ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers and gulls are the targets. Dress warmly and bring something hot to drink, as wind off the lakes can be chilling. Spotting scopes are useful. Contact the trip leader, Henry Link, 273-4672, [linkh@bellsouth.net](mailto:linkh@bellsouth.net) for location. ❀



## Audubon Chapter Day

Saturday, February 7

Audubon's annual Chapter Day is a chance for all members, leaders, and interested parties across the state to come together to share ideas on a range of chapter-oriented topics. This year's agenda will highlight post-election realities at the state and national level and what they mean for Auduboners. Special presentations by a NAS DC-office legislative director and state-level lobbyists will focus on the potential opportunities and challenges ahead. Other topics will cover the organizational elements of chapters, including how to be most effective in times of financial turmoil.

This meeting is open to all chapter members or those wondering about joining a chapter. Everybody is welcome! We'll convene at the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. To register or request more information, contact Anne Brown at [agbrown@audubon.org](mailto:agbrown@audubon.org). ❀

## Great Backyard Bird Count

Friday through Monday, February 13 -16

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is one of the most successful citizen science projects in history. It's a great activity to do with children. It's free. It only takes a minimum of 15 minutes to observe, though you can profitably spend a great deal more time on the count than that. You can count from inside your home, office, or school. You can count on your daily walk or your visit to your local park. It is easy and fun and helps scientists with information about bird population trends.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon jointly sponsor GBBC. In 2008, the count reached new heights. For the fourth year in a row, participants sent record numbers of checklists. As of March 24, bird watchers submitted 85,725 checklists with observations of 635 species, representing 9,805,216 individual bird sightings during the four-day count. Let's work together to make 2009 even more successful.

To learn more about this exciting event, visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>



Photo: Michelle L. Reynolds

## Program: "Operation Ruby-throat: A Costa Rican Adventure"

Thursday, February 12, 7:00 p.m.  
Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Library  
Speaker: Liz Schmid

Liz Schmid, owner of the Wild Birds Unlimited store in High Point, will present a program on her recent (February 2008) trip to Costa Rica to work with Bill Hilton, Jr. on Operation Rubythroat: The Hummingbird Project.

This ongoing endeavor, now almost 10 years old, is conducted by the Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History in York, SC. It is a "cross-disciplinary international initiative in which students, teachers, and others collaborate to study behavior and distribution of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*). Participants live in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) – countries in which this bird regularly occurs."

The primary task of the project was banding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and other neotropical migrants so that migration and dispersion patterns can be established. While much good and valuable work was done, the project also allowed ample time for birding and other wildlife observation in the spectacular Guanacaste region of Costa Rica. Please join us for an evening of marvelous photographs and fascinating stories from one of the most diverse environments on the planet.

For more information about the Hilton Pond Center, including Operation Rubythroat, visit Bill Hilton's website: <http://www.hiltonpond.org> ❁

## Jan/Feb Calendar

**Thu, January 8, 7:00 pm - Meeting:**  
"Close Encounters with Wildlife: A  
Rehabilitator's Story". Speaker: Halley  
Buckanoff

**Sat, January 10 - Field Trip:** White  
Street Landfill with PBC

**Sat, January 24 - Price Park Wet  
Meadow Work Day**

**Sat, January 31 - Field Trip:** Greensboro  
Lakes with PBC

**Sat, February 7 - Audubon NC Chapter  
Day** at the North Carolina Zoo

**Thu, February 12, 7:00 pm - Meeting:**  
"Operation Rubythroat: A Costa Rican  
Adventure". Speaker: Liz Schmid

**February 13-16 - Great Backyard Bird  
Count**

**Sat, February 14, 10:00 am - noon:**  
TGPAS Bird Seed Sale at New Garden  
Nursery Gazebo

**Sun, February 15 - Bird ID Workshop**

**Sat, February 21 - Field Trip:** Latta  
Plantation and Carolina Raptor Center

## Bird Seed Sale Funds TGPAS Projects

Thanks to all of you who participated in our fall bird seed sale. We made \$234 and donated a 50 lb. bag of black oil sunflower seed to Kathleen Clay Edwards Library.

Money earned goes into our Conservation and Education Fund. From this fund we purchase seed and supplies for our two annual ongoing educational projects – the tables we staff at Earth Day at KCEF Library and the Fall Festival at Bur-Mil Park. We have games for kids and adults which draw them into learning about birds. We help children make bird feeders and fill them with seed.

This winter we will again work on maintaining a wet meadow environment at Price Park and spend funds on this project. We also buy supplies to clean,

– continued next page



## Field Trip to Latta Plantation Nature Preserve & Carolina Raptor Center

Saturday, February 21

Jane Lewis will lead our trip to Latta Plantation, where we will see Rough-legged Hawks, Burrowing Owls and many other species. (Well, before you e-mail the North Carolina Bird Records Committee, the Rough-legged Hawk and the Burrowing Owl will be on display at the Carolina Raptor Center – along with a hundred other raptors – on the grounds of the Latta Plantation.)

In the wild, however, we should see raptors, sparrows, waterfowl, and other winter species while walking through the Piedmont bottomland forests, the restored Piedmont prairie, and along the lake shore. The reserve is part of the Mountain Island Lake IBA, designated to protect wintering waterfowl and neotropical migrants.

Please join us at 8 a.m. in the Sears parking lot at Friendly Center to carpool for the hour-and-a-half ride south. Bring lunch and water. We plan to return about 4 p.m. Please call Craig Lawrence at 460-7924 if you are coming. **(Admission to the Raptor Center is \$7 per person, but with 15 people we get a group rate of \$3.50 per person.)** ❁

### Bird Seed Sale – *continued from previous page*

wax, and caulk our interpretive signs along the Price Park wooded trail.

A project we need help with is the display case in the lobby of Kathleen Clay Edwards Library. We would like to put up a new educational display every two months. If this is something that interests you, please call Sue Cole at 854-3346. ❁

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## Bird ID Workshop: “Recognizing Birds by Sight & Birding by Ear, Part 1”

Sunday, February 15, 2:00 - 4:00 pm KCEF Library

In conjunction with the Great Backyard Bird Count being held February 13-16, T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society is offering a workshop on bird identification, including an introduction to birding by ear. We'll focus on visual identification of about a dozen birds commonly seen in Greensboro in winter, and then share tips for identifying the songs of these birds.

We'll start the instruction inside and then head outdoors to practice our skills. Families with children are encouraged to attend this workshop. Bring your binoculars and field guides if you have them, or borrow some from Audubon for the afternoon.

Part II of Birding by Ear will be presented at the Piedmont Bird Club meeting on Thursday evening, February 19, 2009. That workshop, led by Lynn Moseley, will present tips for learning some of the more difficult and easily-confused songs of species in our area. ❁



Cedar Waxwing by James Hendrickson



Northern Cardinal by Judy Howle



Hooded Merganser by James Hendrickson

# Winter 2009 Bird Seed Sale

**Saturday, February 14 New Garden Nursery Gazebo 10 a.m. - noon**

This is your opportunity to order bird seed for the Winter/Spring season and support the educational and environmental projects of the T.G. Pearson Audubon chapter.

**We need your order by Tuesday, February 3.** This will enable us to have enough seed on hand and guarantee your price, even if there is a further increase by the sale date. (Unfortunately, bird seed has been subject to inflation like everything else, but we are keeping October's prices.) The amount of extra seed available for walk-in customers will be very limited.

**All orders MUST be picked up at New Garden Nursery Gazebo, 3811 Lawndale Dr., Greensboro, on Feb. 14 between 10 a.m. and noon.** If you are unable to pick up your order, please arrange to have someone else do so. Orders not picked up by noon will be cancelled, as we do not want to inconvenience New Garden Nursery staff.

For more information, or to volunteer your help at the sale, call Sherri Forrester at 851-0354, or Sue Cole at 854-3346.

Make check payable to <i>Pearson Audubon</i> and mail to:	Pearson Bird Seed Sale c/o Sherri Forrester 4909-A Tower Road Greensboro, NC 27410-5720
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Keep the top part as a reminder to pick up your order on February 14.



Mail the order form and your check so they are received by February 3.

Wt.	Seed Type	Unit Price	Quantity	Subtotal
25#	Black Oil Sunflower	\$22.00		
50#	Black Oil Sunflower	\$38.50		
20#	Wild Bird Premium Mix (contains no milo)	\$15.25		
40#	Wild Bird Premium Mix	\$27.50		
5#	Thistle Seed	\$14.25		
5#	Safflower Seed	\$ 9.50		
	Suet Cake	\$ 1.50		

<b>Total Paid</b>	\$
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_