



SMITH MUSEUM
(NATURAL HISTORY)
1933
PURCHASED
THE UNIVERSITY

CBC NEWSLETTER

for members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., ornithological society of the Carolinas

Volume 39

May/June 1993

Number 3

Out To The Banks

The Outer Banks of North Carolina, a favorite migrant trap for birds and birders, will once again be the site of a Carolina Bird Club fall meeting. With cooperative winds, the September 24-26 dates should deliver a wealth of landbird migrants as well as the usual assortment of shorebirds, waders and other coastal specialties.

Headquarters will be the Comfort Inn Oceanfront at Nags Head. This is the same meeting site which we have used before, but it has recently been renovated internally and has taken on a new name. The rate for up to four persons per room is \$50.00 plus tax. Reservation deadline is September 10, 1993. Please use the form provided in the Newsletter or call toll free 1-800-334-3302.

Directions to Hotel: From Manteo continue on US 64/264 across the

causeway to Nags Head. Upon reaching the Outer Banks do not veer left onto US 158 Bypass but instead proceed straight across the intersection with NC 12. Continue straight ahead 1/10 mile to the beach dunes. Turn right. The Comfort Inn is the large six story hotel just ahead.

As usual on the Outer Banks, anticipation of a favorable frontal passage and bountiful migrants will keep excitement in the air. And just as with fishing, this kind of birding can often be summed up with the statement, "you should have been here yesterday!" So plan to come a day early to take advantage of organized field trips which will be offered on Friday morning as well as the usual Saturday and Sunday morning trips.

Evening programs will be highlighted by our Saturday evening

speaker, Steve Dinsmore: Steve, a gifted young ornithologist and birder, has spent the last year studying the migrations and populations of Sanderlings on the Outer Banks. During this time on the banks he has observed (and photographed) a great variety of shorebirds and other coastal birds, including some truly great rarities. All of this he will share with us.

Those interested in the possibility of an offshore pelagic birding trip to the Gulf Stream on either Saturday or Sunday are advised to immediately call Michael Tove (919) 460-0338 and make inquiry about space available on his pelagic trips for September 24 and 25. These are not CBC sponsored trips, but they are a great opportunity at a modest price. The boat departs from the Pirate's Cove Marina, only a mile or two from our hotel.

More details will be forthcoming in the July/August CBC Newsletter. In the meantime, any questions may be directed to John or Paula Wright (919) 756-5139 or Ricky Davis (919) 443-0276.



Officers elected at spring meeting at Lake Lure, NC (standing L to R) Lex Glover, Harry LeGrand, Teddy Shuler, Bob Wood (seated) Paula Wright, Judy Walker

INSIDE

Traveling Birdwatcher	2
Backyard Birding	3
Migratory Songbirds	4
Field Trip Reports	5
Hotline Highlights	7

Birding The High Desert and Northern Rockies by Dennis Burnette

(Continued from the March/April issue)

As the departure time grew near, I flew out a few days ahead of the rest of the group to do some wildlife photography and exploring on my own. When the group arrived, I was there at the airport in the rental van stocked with the first week's groceries. We planned to eat in restaurants most evenings but fix our own breakfasts and lunches from our communal stores in the van. That part of the plan really worked out well and allowed us to be at our sites during the best birding times without delaying or missing meals.

We first headed west to Deer Flats National Wildlife Refuge for Western and Clark's Grebes, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Black-billed Magpie, and California Quail. Then we traveled into the desert to Bruneau Dunes State Park where the true meaning of desert became clear at 103⁰ F. Here and nearby we spotted Western Kingbirds and Wilson's Phalaropes, along with Great Horned Owls, Black-necked Stilts, several duck species, and other birds at a pond surrounded by dunes and sagebrush.

At the Snake River Birds of Prey Area we were too late in the season to see the large variety of breeding raptors, but Prairie Falcons were relatively plentiful, as were Swainson's Hawks. We saw our only Burrowing Owls here, and got good looks at Sage Sparrows, White-throated Swifts and Violet-green Swallows.

On of the group's favorite sites was City of Rocks National Reserve, a dramatic landscape of huge jumbled boulders, pinnacles and sheer cliffs. We discovered that this area in south central Idaho is well known to rock climbers and should be considered a hot spot by birders as well. Here we saw Mountain Bluebird, Western Tanager, Say's Phoebe, Lazuli Bunting, Red-naped Sapsucker, Mountain Chickadee, Green-tailed Towhee, and many other species.

We visited Cherry Springs Nature Area briefly, where we added warblers and other passerines, as well as a Ruffed Grouse and a Willow Flycatcher. Then we continued on to Bear Lake NWR, another hot spot.



Western Meadowlark

We spent two days in this vicinity and saw many good species including White-faced Ibis, Sandhill Crane, American Avocet, Lark Sparrow, and MacGillivray's Warbler.

On our way north to Grays Lake NWR, we spotted a pair of Short-eared Owls and at the refuge got distant looks at Whooping Cranes which are part of an experimental nesting program there. Not all of our stops were so productive, of course. Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area and a couple of other promising spots didn't produce the hoped-for species.

We were heading out of the sagebrush country now, and into the cooler (and rainy) mountains. A stop at Harriman SP rewarded us not only with displaying Common Snipe but also with Northern Goshawk and Red Crossbill.

Across from the lodge where we spent several nights, Bald Eagles perched along the river, and Trumpeter Swans were nesting in a nearby pond. A Townsend's Solitaire was in the National Forest and, on a tip from a local birder, we spotted a Great Gray Owl along the road that took us into Montana to Red Rock Lakes NWR. In the refuge we noted Eared Grebes in breeding plumage.

We hadn't realized that we would be passing so close to Yellowstone National Park and couldn't resist rearranging our schedule to spend a day and a half there. We picked up a copy of *Birds of Yellowstone* by McEaney, and used this excellent bird-finding guide to locate American Dipper, Barrow's Goldeneye,

Clark's Nutcracker, and Gray Jay, as well as other good species in the park.

We were running out of time and had to start heading back west. Our next stop was another favorite of the group, the Nature Conservancy's Silver Creek Preserve. Although we had already seen most of the species we found there, it was a delightful spot well worth visiting. A popular place for flyfishing, it is another of those wildlife areas that should be better known as a birding hot spot.

The last site on our itinerary was Craters of the Moon National Monument, and area of spectacular landscapes created by volcanic lava flows and cinder cones. By arranging ahead by mail, we were allowed into a portion of the monument generally closed to the public where we saw Blue Grouse, Strickland's Woodpecker, and Golden Eagle.

Not only had we seen many species of birds on the trip, other species of animals were evident as well. Bison, elk, pronghorn, mule deer, red fox, black bear, coyote, jack rabbit, and many species of small mammals had been spotted. Gorgeous wildflowers were everywhere they could find enough water. And the scenery was fantastic.

Our last day on the road was July 3rd. We hadn't seen every bird, but we had put a good dent in our hit list. We got up early, boarded the van and began the last leg of the trip to Boise. Few people were out that early, and we were soon away from town and in the sagebrush again.

I was driving and others were still dozing, their birding done for this trip. Out of the corner of my eye I spotted a familiar shape from the field guide and hit the brakes. Everyone came awake as I shifted into reverse and backed up the empty highway. There, sitting on a bale of hat at the edge of an irrigated field, was a Sage Grouse and slipping into the grass were several half-grown chicks. A lifer for every one!

It was a good way to celebrate the upcoming Fourth of July holiday and a fitting end to a fabulous birding trip.

4209 Bramlet Place
Greensboro, NC 27407

My mailbox has been active with letters from fellow backyard birders since the last newsletter. Kate Lewis, Sumter, SC, had a lone robin hanging around her yard in March. A mockingbird tried to run him off but to no avail. a hundred or more robins migrated through, and Ms. Lewis thought surely the loner would leave with the group. The robin, instead, tried to run the others off. When the migrants finally left, the lone robin sat in a pine tree and sang his plans to stick around.

Ben and Lucy Smith, Mt. Pleasant, SC, had seven male Indigo Buntings in their yard April 17. On the 21st, they saw sixteen males and four or five females. And on the 24th, they had twenty-seven males gobbling up millet! These Indigo Buntings were in addition to a pair of Painted Buntings and a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak (their first ever). The grosbeak began eating white proso millet but later changed to black oil sunflower seed.

Dave Abraham, West Columbia, SC, has had good luck with marvel meal. During the winter, juncoes ate from his "cap-stick" feeders (feeders to which the juncoes had to hang and cling in order to eat. He also had a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and a Myrtle Warbler eating marvel meal.

This spring a pair of bluebirds has been nibbling the marvel meal. The male learned to use the feeder first. The female watched closely and tried but couldn't get the hand of it, so she sat on the ground and ate what the male knocked off. Eventually, though, the female learned to eat from the feeder.

A robin showed up and found some marvel meal crumbs that were quite tasty. He began sitting under the feeder when other birds were on it and catching the dropped tidbits. Mr. Abraham, feeling sorry for the starving robin, stood a brick on end under the feeder. The robin perched on the brick and stared at the feeder hoping another feathered friend would drop some crumbs his way. The robin eventually flew vertically from the brick to the feeder and down again. When that didn't work, the robin put on his hummer act and hovered and poked at the marvel meal.

Brown Thrashers, too, discovered the crumbs beneath the feeder, but they gave up after a day. Perhaps the robin was too tough. Mr. Abraham though he had lost the robin then a thrasher had him down, but the robin got away. he was back at the feeder fifteen minutes later. The

Backyard Birding

with Frances J. Nelson

thrashers were gone.

On April 13, Mr. Abraham watched Cedar Waxwings eat apple blossom petals, and on the 14th, he heard swifts in his chimney (he uncaps his chimney in the spring so the swifts can nest).

With all of the bird activity in his yard, coupled with the large number of feeders, Mr. Abraham stays busy. He's thinking maybe he ought to start raising poultry; then he could get the eggs. He's only bluffing--he enjoys the birds too much to give them up.

Believe it or not, the column is not about backyard birding just in South Carolina, but I heard from no North Carolinians. But CJ and I did have some interesting happenings. We have added five birds to our property list: Tree Swallow (a flock flew over our airspace April 15), Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, an Osprey (also in our airspace), and a pair of Blue-winged Teals. We have heard an Ovenbird but haven't seen him yet.

One morning we awoke to four Great Blue Herons on the pond. And last week I saw five Wood Ducks swimming around (three males, two females). One female flew up in the direction of the nesting box, and this was the day after we had cleaned out a starling nest. Unfortunately, I can't see the box from the house, so I don't know if she went in or not. As much as we would like to have Wood Ducks nest on the pond, we worry about their safety. We have neighborhood dogs that sit and star hungrily at our lone muscovy. I'm sure they'd love a chance at some baby Wood Ducks.

Our regular summer birds are back-- Indigo Buntings, Blue Grosbeak, Summer Tanager, Louisiana Waterthrush, Wood Thrush, etc., and we seem to have more birds this year. Several areas nearby were logged this winter, so I wonder if that's why we have more birds.

The only other news is our wren. We have several bird houses hanging under the eaves of the house. Friends and relatives

buy these homes for birds for us as gifts because they know how we feel about the feathered creatures. An where does the wren build a nest? In the top of the LP gas tank! One week after the tank arrived, the wren started building. She laid five eggs, they hatched, and the birds should fledge tomorrow (May 5). We can't explain it. The tank is by the big dog's doggy door, so it probably gets more traffic than any of the houses would. The nest is situated so that the rain can splash in, a snake could crawl up the side of the house and get to the nest, and when the babies try to leave the nest, the big dog may get a little snack. Perhaps it was my wise crack about the South Carolina wren. This one is definitely a (North) Carolina one. Oh, well, Nature is unexplainable. I'll let you know the outcome of the babies in my next column. Keep me informed of your backyard birding: 1006 Dogwood Hill Lane, Wake Forest, NC 27587.

Le Grand Resigns

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr. surprised Carolina Bird Club members gathered for their annual business meeting at Lake Lure, NC, May 8, 1993, with the announcement of his resignation as regional editor for *American Birds* and editor of Briefs for the Files in *The Chat*. He has held these posts since 1979, and the Club is grateful for his many years of outstanding service. His successor will be named at a later date.

Harry was elected CBC Vice-President for Eastern North Carolina at the meeting and will continue to chair the CBC bird records committee for North Carolina.

Other officers elected at the spring meeting were: President--Lex Glover, Lugoff, SC; Secretary--Len Pardue, Durham, NC; Treasurer--Robert Wood, Columbia, SC; Members-at-Large--Judy Walker, Charlotte, NC, (WNC), Paula Wright, Greenville, NC, (ENC), Teddy Shuler, Tamassee, SC, (SC) and Steve Patterson, Telion, SC, (SC 1 yr. unexpired term). The Executive Committee reelected Robin Carter chairman of the SC bird records committee and Teddy Shuler chairman of the conservation committee.

A full report of the spring meeting will appear in the July/Aug Newsletter.

Migratory Songbirds in Trouble

by John Cely

All members of the Carolina Bird Club should be aware of the plight of our songbirds that nest in North America and migrate to the tropics in winter. These so-called neotropical migrants include the thrushes, flycatchers, orioles, tanagers, vireos, warblers, buntings, grosbeaks, goatsuckers, hummingbirds, cuckoos, swallows, and swifts. About half of the breeding birds in the Carolinas are considered neotropical migrants.

Population trends for many of these species based primarily on results of the Breeding Bird Survey, have caused alarm among many conservationists. Between 1978 and 1987, 75% of all neotropical migrants declined at rates of 1%-3% a year. Particularly hard hit in the Carolinas have been the Wood Thrush, Prairie Warbler, Painted Bunting and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Reasons for these declines are complex and not fully understood, but attention has focused on deforestation of the tropical wintering grounds, especially in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, where some countries have lost 90% of their forest cover, and on fragmentation of the breeding grounds in North America. Even though most migrant songbirds have small breeding territories of an acre or so, studies have documented that it may take habitat of several hundred or thousand acres to support viable populations of these species. As an example, a 100-acre hardwood forest may have no successful breeding pairs of Northern Parulas; it may require a tract twice that size for a single pair of Parula's to produce young, and a forest of 1300 acres as a minimum area for a long-term population survival of Parulas. This "area-sensitive" phenomenon is likely a result of increased predation in the smaller forest tracts on the eggs and young of migrant songbirds by crows, jays, grackles, cats, racoons and other predators, and brood parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds.

Brown-headed Cowbirds, once confined to the western plains where they were called "buffalo birds," have spread eastward with the clearing of forest, and in the process have found more than 100 new host species, primarily neotropical migrants, to exploit. The Kirtland's



Warbler, for example, would probably be extinct without an active cowbird control program.

In 1990 a large group of concerned individuals from academia, state and federal agencies, and private organizations gathered in Atlanta and formed the Partners in Flight program in an effort to conserve neotropical migrant birds. With little funding but a lot of volunteer spirit, this program has focused on five major areas of emphasis: Research, Monitoring, Legislation, International Affairs, and Information and Education. An additional five working groups, representing different regions of the country, were also established. In 1991, the first Southeastern Regional Working Group met in Atlanta and decided to use the "physiographic" approach to neotropical conservation. The Carolinas were divided into three provinces: Southern Coastal Plain, Southern Piedmont and Blue Ridge. Volunteer coordinators were assigned to each region to drum up support and interest for the program. Since 1991, six meetings, all open to the public, have been held at the physiographic regional level. Experts have identified the highest priority species and habitats to focus on.

For the Coastal Plain, highest ranked species are Painted Bunting, Swainson's Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Cerulean Warbler and Hooded Warbler. Priority habitats in the Coastal Plain are bottomland hardwoods, maritime forest, Carolina bays/pocosin, and longleaf pine. For the Piedmont, highest ranked species are Wood Thrush, Cerulean Warbler,

Prothonotary Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler and Swainson's Warbler. Priority Piedmont habitats are riparian forests, upland mature hardwoods, mature mixed pine-hardwood and old fields/scrub habitats. For the Blue Ridge, highest priority species are Chestnut-sided Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Wood Thrush, Golden-winged Warbler, and Cerulean Warbler. Priority Blue Ridge habitats are spruce-fir forest, high-elevation early successional forests, cove hardwood forest and montane alluvial/bottomland forests.

The future of these physiographic region meetings may evolve into state-level programs and meetings. For further information and how you can help, contact for North Carolina, Allen Boynton, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, 209 Ervin Road, Morganton, NC 28655; Harry LeGrand, NC Natural Heritage Program, PO Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611; or Laura Mitchell, US Forest Service, Cherokee National Forest, Cleveland, TN 37312 (for blue ridge information). For South Carolina, contact Sidney Gauthreaux, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634 or John Cely, SC Wildlife and Marine Resources Dept., PO Box 167, Columbia, SC 29202. Input is needed from all federal, state and private individuals and organizations involved in land management such as timber companies, extension agents, and consulting foresters. Input from birders would be valuable, especially because of their abilities to survey and monitor bird populations.

An excellent, non-technical book that started the ball rolling in this effort is highly recommended reading: *Where Have All the Birds Gone?* by John Terborgh, Princeton University Press, 207 pp.; \$14.95 soft cover.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is producing an informative newsletter on neotropical migratory birds and the Partners in Flight effort. To get on the mailing list, write: Peter Stangel, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036.

Field Trip Reports

Amazonian Ecuador

by Len Pardue

Latin America saw lifers by the dozen (185 of the 208 species I observed were lifers). We were fortunate that our leaders, Derb (an environmental lawyer based in Chapel Hill) and Merrill (a field biologist for the N. C. Nature Conservancy), had visited Ecuador's rainforest and mountains at least twice before. So had Harry, a biologist with the N. C. Natural Heritage Program. All of them added significantly to their life lists this time. But numbers fail to suggest the excitement of the trip. Along with seeing exotic birds, we visited a wild place and glimpsed a different culture.

The trip's second morning, we left Quito in a two-engine prop airliner to cross the eastern range of the Andes. After we passed a snow-capped volcano and reached the eastern slope, we flew over what seemed an endless expanse of green--the rainforest.

We landed at Coca, a dusty, raw-looking oil frontier town (yes, there's oil in the jungle--a pipeline carries it across the mountains to the coast). Our bus matched the town's character. It consisted of rows

of benches on the back of a roofed flatbed truck. As we rode the few blocks to the Rio Napo, our driver careened around the biggest potholes, honking his horn madly. A thatch-roofed motor launch lined with two-person seats and loaded with supplies carried us the two-and-a-half hour ride to La Selva.

Though the river often reaches a half-mile in width, we got close enough to shore to see Swallow-winged Puffbirds foraging from perches high in snags; in the air we saw Greater Yellow-headed Vultures, which look much like Turkey Vultures, except for head color; and White-banded Swallows, black save for white chest bands.

Finally we came to La Selva's dock, and soon we were walking along a boardwalk through marshy woods, and our local guides began pointing out birds. One was the rare Orange-crested Manakin that some of us heard and then spied--by twisting and craning and peering through and beyond limbs and leaves--a necessity of rainforest birding. Down the boardwalk we reached another dock at the head of a sparkling oxbow lake called Garzacochoa.

The lodge sits at the other end of the lake, and we reached it in two dugout canoes, birding on the way and getting a look at a cross-section of the forest--towering trees and dense understory in which vines, limbs and leaves reach from ground to canopy.

Our quarters were comfortable, but far from luxurious. We slept under mosquito netting in thatched-roof cottages, showered in unheated water pumped from the lake, used flashlights and kerosene lanterns at night; ate generous and tasty meals, drank bottled water or other bottled or boiled drinks. All told--except for the stomach bug--La Selva treated us kindly.

Everyone no doubt recalls particular special moments. I'll always remember seeing a Swallow-tailed Kite float butterfly-like to the surface of Garzacochoa for a drink; watching a pair of Blue-and-yellow Macaws cruise by in perfect light; seeing Many-banded Aracaris (cousins of the toucan) forage close by La Selva's 100-foot-tall observation tower, which wraps around a giant tree; watching clouds of Blue-headed Parrots and Cobalt-winged

(continued next page)

As the 15 people on a CBC sponsored trip to Ecuador got off the plane in Quito on February 12, someone heard the common but sprightly Rufous-collared Sparrow. At our hotel later that afternoon, Harry LeGrand took up station outside the entrance, others of us joined him, and soon--with Harry's guidance--in the trees and shrubs across the street we spotted a Cinereous Conebill, a handsome Yellow Grosbeak, and a probable Long-tailed Hermit (a hummingbird).

For the next nine days, six of them in the rainforest east of the Andes, we tested our binoculars, our stamina and our birding skills. We encountered rain, humidity, chiggers, ants, and stomach bugs. But the birds we saw and the wonders of our surroundings more than compensated for the challenges.

Our group, led by Merrill Lynch and Derb Carter, identified a total of 337 species in Ecuador. Individual totals varied widely, if only because we often split into two groups in the rainforest. The group listed 303 species in the lowlands, and 34 more in Quito and on a day trip in the Andes. (Some of us spent a few hours birding in Miami between planes on the way home February 21, but I'll omit that excursion.) Though only twice the size of North Carolina, Ecuador boasts about 1,400 species of birds. More than 500 species have been seen near La Selva Lodge, our base in the rainforest.

Those of us making first time trips to



Fausto (local guide); Derb Carter (co-leader); Harriet Sato, Raleigh, NC; Jean McCoy, Greensboro, NC & Harry Legrand, Raleigh, NC at La Selva

(continued from previous page)
Parakeets approach a salt lick along the Rio Napo; tracking down an inconspicuous, nuthatch-sized Dwarf Tyrant-Manakin that repeated its squeaky call dozens of times while we searched for it mid-way up in the canopy.

More than once I recall one of our guides spending 20 minutes trying to help one of us find an elusive bird, and usually succeeding. As a result, in a thick patch of rainforest, everyone in Merrill's group saw the memorable Blue-backed Manakin, black with a blue shoulder patch and a red patch on its head, and most in our group at least glimpsed the rare Castelnau's Antshrike amidst tall cane on an island in the Napo.

But there was so much more--a sleek Black Caracara raiding the pendulous nests of Yellow-rumped Caciques in a tree just outside the dining hall, setting off an enormous row among the grackle-like caciques; an yellow-and-black-winged butterfly perched on the forehead of one of us as we visited La Selva's butterfly farm; the Silver-beaked Tanagers, bills truly silver against their burgundy-red bodies, birds that never became commonplace though we saw them daily.

We saw three species of monkeys, bats large and small, and many butterflies (the Morphos were spectacular--large, mostly black creatures, with Carolina-blue wing patches), but perhaps as few as four snakes--one of which was a boa constrictor that a guide had captured.

Everyone got good views of the peculiar Hoatzin, a turkey-sized arboreal bird with a punk haircut. The rare Zigzag Heron eluded all but two or three of us. While a Harpy Eagle was seen in the area during our visit, none of us observed it.

For the record, the group saw 10 species of hummingbirds in the rainforest, five more in the Andes; 20 species of tanagers, including two in the highlands; 14 species of parrots (the family that includes macaws); 27 species of antbirds. Derb, Merrill and Harry added three or four species to La Selva's still growing list (the lodge opened five years ago), including Bank Swallow, Least Sandpiper, and, most significantly, Yellow-bellied Seedeater. It is not known as a bird of the Amazon basin, according to *Birds of Colombia* (there is no field guide for Ecuador), but it was well seen by Merrill, our guide and one other observer.

Our day trip in the highlands was divided

between birding and a visit to an Indian market in Otovalo, where hats, baskets, shirts, and other items are sold from a hundred or more stalls in a square. Prices by U.S. standards were low; I'm a poor judge of quality but four scarves my wife Ester bought seemed first-rate. That afternoon, our final day in Ecuador, we drove to a high pass east of Quito and birded several habitats, seeing several new species and more spectacular scenery.

Quito left mixed impressions. Of the three dinners we ate there, two were tasty, all inexpensive. Streets were crowded, but traffic moved better than in big U.S. cities. We saw no signs of desperate poverty--but our time there was brief. Our hotel was plain but comfortable, the staff gracious, the showers hot, the towels thin, the outside noise sometime annoying. The city's setting, in a high mountain valley, is spectacular. Though our trip home began with a confusing struggle through crowds at the Quito terminal, the rest of the journey was uneventful. And even the airport crunch seemed just one more of the challenges that tropical birders must take in stride.

Saturday April 17, 1993 dawned bright, clear, and crisp. An energetic group of CBC birders met at Greenfield Lake Park in Wilmington, NC with high hopes for a full day of good weather, good fellowship, and especially good birds.

As the group started out to check the lake we immediately found a Spotted Sandpiper teetering on a boat dock right at our feet! Continuing on, we started searching for migrants at various stops around the lake shore. It was quickly apparent that we were a little early in the season for finding many migrants, so the local breeding birds became the focus for the rest of the morning. It was not long before we had good looks at such birds as Great Crested Flycatcher, Parula and Yellow-throated Warblers, and Orchard Oriole. At one point we stumbled upon the local expert, Kitty Kosh (whose bird feeder rules the neighborhood!), and she promptly showed us a nesting Red-shouldered Hawk. This got up pretty pumped up, so we headed off to another stop--Carolina Beach State Park.

As we got out of our cars, practically the first birds we saw were a male Rose-

breasted Grosbeak and a Summer Tanager. The grosbeak, being a locally uncommon spring transient, and a lifer for some, really excited everyone! Then while walking a trail in the woods, we stumbled upon a Red-breasted Nuthatch (which has been hard to find even in winter) and a Worm-eating Warbler which proved hard to see. Add to these, a beautiful, singing Prothonotary Warbler at close range, and you can see that we enjoyed the birding at the State Park very much.

After a lunch break in town, we headed on to the Fort Fisher area to look for water birds. By now the wind was blowing rather strongly and the birds were not very cooperative. We had few good looks at the gulls, terns, sandpipers, and herons in the area until we walked to a tidal creek near the Resources Center.

Wilmington Area Spring Birds

by Ricky Davis

Here we easily studied dowitchers, oystercatchers, and a Clapper Rail.

At this point the group was beginning to thin out, and by the time we headed back toward Wilmington, we had a group of seven left. We drove back along the scenic River Road and at the last minute decided to go over to the Eagle Island spoil area. We were fortunate to find the local birder, Bob Merrick, who has permission to go into the restricted area. Bob was very nice to accommodate our group on such surprise notice, and he went in with us. After about two miles of walking, we finally found the water where the birds were. We got good looks at Black-necked Stilt (which are local breeders) and had a good opportunity to compare peeps such as Least, Semi-palmated, and White-rumped Sandpipers. This was a fitting end to a long day of birding and most of the group added lifers or state birds to their lists. We all took a lasting impression of the area and its birds home with us. Hopefully the trip inspired us to want to come back to the Wilmington area again in the near future for another day of birding.

(Caution: sightings reported on the RBA are not necessarily verified, and publication in the newsletter does not substitute for review by the appropriate Bird Records Committee and publication in *The Chat*.)

Hotline Highlights

by Taylor Piephoff

March/April, 1993

Numbers of rare bird alert reports were somewhat scarce for the period, but some very exciting birds were reported nonetheless. A Black Guillemot, possibly

North Carolina's first, was discovered at Wrightsville Beach, NC. It is very possible or even likely that this bird is the same one that spent the winter at

Huntington Beach State Park in South Carolina.

Two reports of Pacific Loon were received from coastal NC, while a Red-throated Loon was present in Mecklenburg County, NC, for a rare inland report. Red-necked Grebes lingered at Greensboro, NC into April; long enough to acquire breeding plumage. Just a few results of offshore trips were called in for the period. Northern Fulmar and Great Skua

(continued next page)

Membership Application and Order Form

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Tel. () _____ () _____
(home) (business)

Enter/Renew Membership As Indicated

Send Materials Indicated

___ Individual (\$12)
___ Family (\$15)
___ Student (\$6)
___ Affiliate Club (\$15)
___ Library/Institution (\$15)

___ Life (\$200)
___ Patron (\$50)

___ CBC Cloth arm patch \$1.50 ea., \$1.25 ea. in quantity
___ CBC Decals (vinyl stick-on) \$1.50 ea., \$1.25 ea. in quantity
___ Daily Checklists 10/\$1.00, 25/\$1.25, 50/\$2.50, 75/\$3.75
100/\$5.00

Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club, Inc. and mail to PO Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611

Registration Form

CBC Fall Meeting, September 24-26, 1993

Name(s) _____

(list each name for name tags)

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ member registrations at \$4 each and _____ nonmember registrations at \$5 each. Registration at meeting will be \$5 for members and \$6 for nonmembers.

Mail with check to Carolina Bird Club, Inc., PO Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611

Comfort Inn Reservation Form

Carolina Bird Club

Fall Meeting, September 24-26, 1993

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Rooms (up to 4 persons) \$50.00 plus tax.

Please reserve _____ room(s) at \$50.00 per night. The number of occupants for each room is _____. My check for the first night's lodging is enclosed. I will arrive _____ and depart _____.

Mail with deposit to Comfort Inn Oceanfront, PO Box 307, Nags Head, NC 27959 or call 1-800-334-3302

Welcome New Members

Mary Arginteanu
Richmond, VA

Charles W. Byrd
Durham, NC

Mayella Calhoun
Oriental, NC

C.H. Cassetti
Lexington, SC

Bob & Sara Cook
Salisbury, NC

Livia Cooper
Pink Hill, NC

Leto Copeley & Marsha Ford
Charlotte, NC

Cynthia Donaldson
Pfafftown, NC

Bert Fisher
Durham, NC

Burke Hicks
Granite Falls, NC

John Holleman
Hickory, NC

June Horsman
Virginia Beach, VA

J. A. Im-Brogno
Monessen, PA

Betsy & Dave Irwin
Cary, NC

M/M Ernest Jones
Murphy, NC

Fran Lynn & Theo Luebke
Durham, NC

Thomas S. McNeil
Hampton, TN

Alice Morley
Murphy, NC

The Pacileo Family
Surfside Beach, SC

Svend R. Schmidt
1M3/USS WASP

Michael L. Smith
Roanoke, VA

Darrel & Alice Walker
Aiken, SC

Kathlene & Ford Walters
Mars Hill, NC

Susan Wilson & Don Myers
Leicester, NC

Hotline Highlights

(continued from previous page)

highlighted offshore birding for the period. Upland Sandpipers were present in large numbers at Orangeburg, SC, and Greensboro, NC, in April. A Red Phalarope was on shore in North Carolina and two Black-tailed Godwits were in that state's offshore banks. Several Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites were reported

CBC Rare Bird Alert

(704) 332-BIRD

as migration overshoots in NC. The only passerine of note to be reported for the period was a Gray Kingbird at Sunset Beach, NC, in April. This bird lingered long enough to be photographed and videotaped. Winter finches were yet again virtually absent, with only a few Pine Siskins heard from in North Carolina.

CBC Newsletter is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc., the ornithological society of the Carolinas, with headquarters at Raleigh, NC. CBC is a nonprofit corporation, founded in 1937, with membership open to anyone interested in birds, natural history and conservation. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to CBC Newsletter, Clyde Smith, Editor, 2615 Wells Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27608.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB, INC.



P.O. BOX 27647, RALEIGH, NC 27611

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Post Office
Permit No. 1654
Raleigh, NC 27611

