



NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 45

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Number 6

Beaufort in Winter - First Meeting of the 21st Century



The Carolina Bird Club winter meeting will be held in Beaufort SC, January 28-30, 2000.

If you were there in September of 1996, you know what a great place it is. If you didn't make it then, you have a pleasant surprise waiting for you. Beaufort is on the water with breathtaking views. Nature at it's best, and all you have to do is enjoy it. There are many historical homes to see along tree-lined streets. Excellent birding, recreation, lodging, dining, and shopping will make your trip come back to your mind for time eternal. Many of the field trips will be in the ACE Basin. The Basin has enormous natural value because private landowners over a large geographical area have tended it wisely. Undeveloped, the area has not been polluted.

Our motel headquarters will be the Holiday Inn in Beaufort, SC, located on Hwy. 21. Phone (843)-524-2144. Be sure to use the three-letter code CBC to make your reservations. Make your reservations early; the motel usually fills up two months in advance due to Parris Island graduation each month.

Registration will start at 11:00 a.m. Friday morning at the motel and move in the evening to our meeting place at the auditorium of the Technical College of the Lowcountry. The auditorium is located at 100 Ribaut Road. Turn right at the traffic light across from the motel and go approximately one mile. The auditorium is on the right side. A get-acquainted time and refreshments (no cash bar) will begin at 6:30 p.m. At 8:00 p.m. **Bill Elliot** and **John Cely** will be talking to us about tracking Swallow-tail Kites with transmitters. A bird-on-your-own flyer will be available at the motel desk for Thursday early birders. Friday field trips will start at 7:00 a.m. with full and half-day excursions. Saturday field trips will also begin at 7:00 a.m. with many half-day and full-day adventures. Please complete your Meeting and Field Trip Registration Form and mail it as soon as you can so that we will know if we will need to add more trips to serve you better. Saturday evening from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. we can compare notes on the day's birding. At 8:00 p.m. **Bill Hilton Jr.**, from York, SC, will be talking about "Hummingbirds

and Hamburgers" (The Tropical Connection).

I have not set up an ACE Basin Boat tour as the weather may be a little raw in January -- but -- if, as time gets closer, the weather cooperates, I will post something on the CBC Web site: <http://members.aol.com/cbirdclub>. We will have a short boat trip over to Pritchard Island that you will love. There will be a morning and afternoon trip Friday and Saturday. Each trip is limited to 20 people, and the cost will be \$5.00 per person. There will also be a wagon ride tour on Bear Island Friday and Saturday mornings. People who have trouble walking far and non-birding spouses who wish to register for this trip should so indicate, and we will give you priority. The limit is 35 each day.

For additional information contact **Van Atkins**, 2040 Church Creek Dr., Charleston, SC. 29414. Phone (843) 766-7000, Fax (843) 556-1592 or e-mail: vatkins@awod.com.

Future Seasonal Meetings

Spring 2000: Blowing Rock, NC
May 5-7

Spring 2001: Asheville/Hendersonville, NC

Fall 2000: Fort Caswell, NC
September 29-October 1

Fall 2001: Santee, SC

Winter 2001: Atlantic Beach, NC
January 26-28

Winter 2002: Nags Head, NC

Suggestions for future meeting places are welcome. Contact a member of the Executive Committee.

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CBC Newsletter

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Carolina Bird Club, Inc.

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CBC Rare Bird Alert

(704) 332-BIRD

Floyd Couldn't Dampen Spirits

by Patricia Tyndall

An uninvited guest named Floyd tried to keep Carolina Bird Club members from visiting Charleston, SC., in September, but the storm, which did hit parts of North and South Carolina hard, could not stop the fall meeting.

Though not all the registered members could attend, those who did were treated to good birds, terrific programs and cooperative weather.

Van Atkins, SC, member-at-large, organized field trips to plantations, gardens, beaches and historic Charleston sites. The beautiful scenery was only matched by good bird sightings including, Philadelphia Vireo, Nashville and Wilson warblers, Sora and a Dickcissel.

Two terrific speakers presented programs on Friday and Saturday.

Tom Blagden shared his breath-taking pictures of nature in SC. Blagden had a series of photos from a recent photo shoot on Wood Storks. The audience was treated to up-close pictures of nesting Wood Storks and were certainly thankful that we did not have to climb through the swamp and up the tower Blagden had to use to photograph the birds.

Everyone in attendance learned interesting facts about hummingbirds from **Bob and Martha Sargent** of Alabama.

The Sargents, who founded The Hummer/Bird Study Group, Inc. in 1993, wowed the crowd with several up-close photos of common and rare hummingbirds they have banded over the years. CBC members also learned about ways to attract hummingbirds to their yards. The Sargents shared their secrets of the best plants to have, care for feeders and control of pests.

The Sargents have banded more than 9,000 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at their home and banding station in Clay, Alabama and have banded and documented several rare visiting hummingbird sightings in North and South Carolina.

Bylaws amended

During a business session the membership approved changes to the bylaws which allow for the membership dues to be increased for the coming year.

The new membership categories and dues changes are as follows:

Student, \$10/\$15
Individual, \$15/\$20
Associate (new), \$5
Sustaining (new), \$25
Patron, \$50/\$50 and up
Life \$400 in 4 years (Those currently working on a life membership can continue toward their \$250 level.)

The bylaws also were amended to define voting rights for the membership categories.

One vote may be cast by persons 15 years old and up for each paid-up membership in the following categories [non-profit organizations and business entities may not cast votes]:

- Individual
- Associate (in same household with individual member)
- Student
- Sustaining
- Patron
- Life

Nominations committee members appointed

Judy Walker, from Charlotte, and **John Fussell**, of Morehead City, have been named to the Nominations Committee. **Lex Glover**, of Lugoff, SC., is the chairman of the committee. The Nominations Committee will prepare a slate of nominees to serve in any offices to be vacated on the CBC Executive Committee.

Field Trip Coordinators

The CBC now has two field trip coordinators to organize trips throughout the year. **Steve Patterson** will organize (continued on page 10)

CBC Web Site

<http://members.aol.com/cbirdclub>

November 8, 1999. I received a nice letter from **Dave Lovett** of Charlotte, NC. He and his wife went on a field trip September 18 to Jackson Park, near Hendersonville, where he saw a Northern Waterthrush; his wife missed it. The next morning, Mr. Lovett was sitting on his deck reading the paper and watching the regular birds in his yard. Some movement about 25' away at the edge of a small group of trees caught his eye. He could see the wagging tail, jerky movements and eye stripe of what he thought was a Northern Waterthrush. He bolted into the house like a madman for his binoculars which he says he should have had with him in the first place. He was right about the bird; it was a Northern Waterthrush and this time his wife saw it, too. She says it came because she missed it the day before at Jackson Park, and Charlotte is south of Hendersonville. He says he'll never sit on the deck to read the paper again without his binoculars close by.

Another interesting tidbit from Mr. Lovett's letter is his description of one of his "ponds" and this was where the waterthrush was turning over last winter's leaves. The pond is a turtle sandbox filled with rocks with a dripper hose threaded through a clay strawberry pot" and is a popular place with his backyard birds.

We have had no waterthrushes in our yard, but CJ did see a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak on our platform feeder on September 23. On October 2, a Saturday, I arose before the House Finches and saw all "good" birds on our feeders. First, goldfinches covered every hole on

Backyard Birding

with Frances J. Nelson



the tube feeder, but pretty soon, the chickadees arrived and shared the feeder with the goldfinches. Meanwhile, a Brown-headed Nuthatch, a White-breasted Nuthatch, and a Pine Warbler took turns at the suet hanging near the tube feeder. A titmouse flew in, looking about the size of a robin because it was so much larger than the little birds. Later, three brown-headed

and four chickadees shared the tube feeder while a Red-bellied Woodpecker feasted on the suet. A Brown-headed Nuthatch flew onto the suet and frightened the woodpecker. A Pine Warbler who had been waiting patiently for the woodpecker to finish, got on the top of the suet feeder and the brown-headed fed from the bottom.

On October 18, I looked out the front window to see three bluebirds on the platform feeder. I've seen bluebirds there before, but they were using the platform as a scanning tower. This time, they were actually feeding. CJ said they were probably this year's brood and were looking for bugs in the feeder. Two days later, the bluebirds were replaced by a Red-breasted Nuthatch. So, now we have the three eastern nuthatches hanging around our feeders.

We know cooler weather is coming for sure because we saw our first junco on October 23 and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on the 27th. The Yellow-rumped Warblers showed up with little fanfare and we forgot to note the date, but on November 4, CJ saw seven or eight Pine Siskins at our feeder, and he heard a White-throated Sparrow. And our feeders are active most of the day with winter-coated goldfinches, the three nuthatch breeds, chickadees, titmice, cardinals, Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and Pine Warblers.

Happy birding, and please let me hear from you: 2061 Ferbow Street, Creedmoor, NC 27522; (919) 528-1156; cfn@aol.com

Chip Notes from Here and There

Request For Assistance

Painted Buntings (*Passerina ciris*) of the Atlantic Coast breeding population are being uniquely color-banded from southeastern North Carolina to northeastern Florida as part of a five-year study of annual survival. Each bird has a metal band plus three color bands (2 bands each leg). Color bands being used are: dark blue, light blue, yellow, red, dark pink, light pink, orange, purple, light green, and black. Carefully note band positions (upper and lower on bird's left or right legs). One to three bands of the same

color may be used on an individual. Please send sightings of color-banded buntings to **Paul Sykes**, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, School of Forest Resources, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-2152 (ph. 706/542-1237, FAX 706/542-1235, E-mail Paul_Sykes@usgs.gov).

Winter Hummingbirds

Susan Campbell is on the verge of getting her permit for banding hummingbirds. In the meantime she is keeping tabs on late/wintering

hummingbirds in North Carolina. Those who sight such birds should notify Susan at (910) 949-3207 or ncaves@utinet.net. Keep those hummer feeders up!

Ventures 2000 Brochure

The new 2000 Ventures Bird Watching and Nature Tours brochure is now ready. Get your copy from Simon Thompson, Ventures, Inc.; PO Box 1095, Skyland, NC 28776; Phone/FAX: (828) 859-0382; simon@teleplex.net. You can also visit their Web site at www.birdventures.com.

1999-2000 Christmas Bird Counts

(The 100th Christmas Bird Count is the world's oldest and largest citizen science program. If you would like to participate in one or more of the counts listed below for the Carolinas, contact the person indicated for further information. In most cases the phone numbers are home numbers and should not be called after 9:00 p.m.)

Friday, December 17, 1999

Brevard, NC	Norma Siebenheller	(828) 884-5443
Congaree Swamp, SC	Robin Carter/Caroline Eastman eastman@cs.sc.edu	(803) 782-8820

Saturday, December 18, 1999

Clemson, SC	J. Drew Lanham	lanhamj@clemson.edu	(864) 985-0170
Columbia, SC	Robin Carter/Caroline Eastman	eastman@cs.sc.edu	(803) 782-8820
Greensboro, NC	Elizabeth Link		(336) 273-4672
McClellanville, SC	Perry E. Nugent		(843) 556-3841
Mount Jefferson, NC	Vaughan Morrison	elm1@skybest.com	(336) 877-8795
Raleigh, NC	Susan Campbell	ncaves@utinet.net	(910) 949-3207
	Bob Hader		(919) 782-1898
Raven Rock SP, NC	Paul Hart	harttwins@aol.com	(910) 893-4888
Tryon, NC	Simon Thompson	simon@teleplex.net	(828) 859-0382
Wayne County, NC	Eric/Celia Dean	edeangld@icomnet.com	(919) 736-7264
York/Rock Hill, SC	Bill Hilton, Jr.	bhilton@infoave.net	(803) 684-0255

Sunday, December 19, 1999

Durham, NC	Mike Schultz	mschultz@duke.edu	(919) 490-6761
Henderson County, NC	Wayne K. Forsythe	wforsythe@a-o.com	(828) 697-6628
Hendersonville, NC	Marilyn Westphal	mjwestphal@unca.edu	(828) 891-9896
Lake Norman, NC	Taylor Piephoff	PiephoffT@aol.com	(704) 532-6336
Morehead City, NC	John Fussell	jfuss@bmd.clis.com	(252) 240-1046
Southern Pines, NC	Libbá Watson	weymouth@pinchurst.net	(910) 692-2167

Tuesday, December 21, 1999

Chester, SC	Albert Conway	(803) 329-3759
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Thursday, December 23, 1999

Long Cane, SC	Steve Wagner	swagner@lander.edu	(864)223-0416
New River, NC	James Coman	hillshepherd@skybest.com	(336) 359-2909

Sunday, December 26, 1999

Chapel Hill, NC	Will Cook	cwcook@duke.edu	(919) 967-5446
Charlotte, NC	Wayne Covington		(704) 556-7383
Cumberland County, NC	Hal Broadfoot, Jr.	halwb@aol.com	after 12/14 - (910) 484-2348

Monday, December 27, 1999

Bodie/Pea Island, NC	Paul Sykes	(706) 769-9436
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Tuesday, December 28, 1999

Cape Hatteras, NC	Harry LeGrand	harry.legrand@ncmail.net	(919) 832-3202
Charleston, SC	Ed Plitch		(843) 795-5277

(continued on page 6)

Field Trip Schedule

CBC Winter Meeting, Beaufort, SC

January 28-30, 2000

Trip # **Departure Time** **Name of Trip**

Thursday, January 27 - Birding on your own (site list at desk).

Friday, January 28, All-Day Trips

- | | | |
|---|---------|---|
| 1 | 7:00 am | Donnelly WMA |
| 2 | 7:05 am | Bear Island WMA |
| 3 | 7:10 am | Savannah NWR, Onslow Island, Webb Wildlife Center |

Friday, January 28, Half-Day Trips

- | | | |
|----|---------|----------------------------|
| 4 | 7:20 am | Bear Island WMA Wagon Tour |
| 5 | 7:25 am | Bear Island WMA |
| 6 | 7:30 am | Pritchard Island (\$5 fee) |
| 7 | 7:35 am | Donnelly WMA |
| 8 | 7:40 am | Spring Island |
| 9 | 7:45 am | Parris Island |
| 10 | 1:00 pm | Bear Island WMA |
| 11 | 1:05 pm | Donnelly WMA |
| 12 | 1:10 pm | Spring Island |
| 13 | 1:15 pm | Parris Island |
| 14 | 1:20 pm | Harbor Island |
| 15 | 1:25 pm | Pritchard Island (\$5 fee) |

Trip # **Departure Time** **Name of Trip**

Saturday, January 29, All-Day Trips

- | | | |
|----|---------|---|
| 16 | 7:00 am | Bear Island WMA |
| 17 | 7:05 am | Donnelly WMA |
| 18 | 7:10 am | Savannah NWR, Onslow Island, Webb Wildlife Center |

Saturday, January 29, Half-Day Trips

- | | | |
|-----|---------|----------------------------|
| 19 | 7:20 am | Bear Island WMA Wagon Tour |
| 20 | 7:25 am | Bear Island WMA |
| 21A | 7:30 am | Donnelly WMA |
| 21B | 7:35 am | Donnelly WMA |
| 22 | 7:40 am | Pritchard Island (\$5 fee) |
| 23 | 7:45 am | Parris Island |
| 24 | 7:50 am | Spring Island |
| 25 | 1:00 pm | Bear Island WMA |
| 26 | 1:05 pm | Donnelly WMA |
| 27 | 1:10 pm | Spring Island |
| 28 | 1:15 pm | Parris Island |
| 29 | 1:20 pm | Harbor Island |
| 30 | 1:25 pm | Pritchard Island (\$5 fee) |

Winter Meeting Field Trip Descriptions

Bear Island WMA: located between the Edisto and Ashepoo rivers covering some 13,000 acres of marsh impoundment's, tidal marshes, woodlands and agricultural lands. Ducks, ducks and more ducks should be the order of the day. There have been White Pelicans there for the past 2 months. Eagles are a sure bet, and we should find Black-necked Stilts. Also Shore birds. Tom Murphy has arranged for a tractor and trailer to make a tour of the Refuge on Friday and Saturday mornings. There is a limit of 35 people on each trip.

Donnelly WMA: This 18,000 acres of property is a cross section of the lowcountry: wetlands, managed rice fields, forested wetlands and a natural stand of long leaf pine. If the water is down there will be a lot of shore birds. If it is up then there will be a lot of ducks. I saw a Golden Eagle there last week. There have been five Sandhill Cranes there in October and November.

Savannah NWR: A gem of seven miles of driving the causeways with plenty of places to pull off the road and explore the great birding and check for rarities. **Onslow Island:** This

small island (part of the Savannah NWR) is really another dredge spoil site. In January the pond frequently has a small population of Stilt Sandpipers and American Avocets as well as more common Sandpipers. Sparrows are usually in abundance to test your ID skills. **Webb Wildlife Center:** One of the few places we will see Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers on our trips. This is a small refuge but a gem.

Spring Island: This is a gated community that we have permission to bird. It has been left natural with a lot of areas for wildlife. It is only 12 miles from the motel and will be the place to watch for rare birds.

Parris Island: This is the Marine Base, but don't let that fool you; it has ponds, lakes, and camping areas that make for great birding. Just a short way from the motel.

Pritchard Island: is a pristine three-mile long barrier island owned by the University of South Carolina. It is just north of Beaufort next to Fripp Island. It is well known as one of the last

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Descriptions (continued from previous page)

undisturbed nesting habitats on the SC coast for the Loggerhead Sea Turtle. USC uses it for research, instruction and as a center for the loggerhead turtle conservation project. The island is restricted to limited parties of outdoor and environmental education-oriented groups. A USC naturalist will guide us on our trip which is limited to 20 people. There will be a short boat ride from Fripp Island. We will have a morning and afternoon

trip Friday and Saturday. The cost will be \$5.00 each payable at the meeting. Sign up early; this will be a great trip.

Harbor Island: This is also a private community with great birding. George and Judy Halleron live here, and they have offered to share their island with us. If you are online then you will remember seeing the never-ending reports on Carolinabirds of the different birds coming to their island. This is also close to the motel.

Christmas Bird Counts (continued from page 4)

Thursday, December 30, 1999

Litchfield/Pawleys Island	Jack Peachey (E of Waccamaw R)	ppaw@sccoast.net	(843) 347-5810
	Tonya Spires (W of Waccamaw R.)		(843) 397-0384
Ocracoke Island, NC	Peter Vankevich	pvanv@cais.net	(202) 547-4523
Spartanburg, SC	Lyle Campbell	lcampbell@gw.uscs.edu	(864) 585-1228

Friday, December 31, 1999

Portsmouth Island, NC	Peter Vankevich	pvanv@cais.net	(202) 547-4523
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Saturday, January 1, 2000

Ace Basin, SC	David Chamberlain		(843) 884-0019
	Pete Laurie		(843) 559-2046
Falls Lake, NC	Brian Bockhahn	birdranger@excite.com	(919) 967-4732
Stone Mountain, NC	John MacConnell	jgmac@fastransit.net	(336) 384-1162
Wilmington, NC	Sam Cooper	czrwilm@aol.com	(910) 799-3825

Sunday, January 2, 2000

Buncombe County, NC	Marilyn Westphal	mjwestphal@unca.edu	(828) 891-9896
Carolina Sandhills NWR, SC	Bill Hilton, Jr.	bhilton@infoave.net	(803) 684-0255
Greenville, NC	John Wright	jwright@skantech.net	(252) 756-5139
Jordan Lake, NC	Barbara Roth	Bfarroth@aol.com	(919) 967-4732
Pee Dee NWR, NC	Bob Kluttz		(704) 563-8613
Santee NWR, SC	Lex Glover	bgivr@clemson.edu	(803) 438-9855
Southport, NC	Ricky Davis	RJDNC@aol.com	(252) 443-0276

Monday, January 3, 2000

Cleveland County, NC	Jo Ann Martin	jamloon@blueridge.net	(828) 453-7400
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Cure for the Summer Blahs - - A Mini-Breeding Bird Survey

by R. Haven Wiley

The national Breeding Bird Survey, organized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has generated striking evidence for changes in bird populations in the United States in the last half of this century. In this survey, each participant counts birds seen or heard every half mile along a 25-mile route once a year. Over 2000 of these routes are run each year at randomly selected locations throughout the United States and southern Canada. North Carolina has about 50 of these routes, fewer than one per county.

A Mini-Breeding Bird Survey (MBBS) consists of similar roadside surveys, but, unlike the national survey, it includes 10 or more shorter routes in one county.

Why a Mini-Breeding Bird Survey? First of all, like the national survey, it's a way to obtain information about trends in populations of summering birds. It complements the local Christmas Bird Count and spring migration Big Day. Over the years, information from annual surveys can document local changes in breeding bird populations. Such information is power. Those who are concerned about loss of habitat in the wake of urban sprawl, for instance, will find they can use this information to gain the ear of fellow citizens and local governments.

But the best reason for an MBBS, we discovered, is sheer fun! Each year, as May passes, we all face the annual birding doldrums -- at least a month with few migrants and vagrants. We are stuck with our familiar local breeders. We discovered, however, that the combination of summer birding and a chance to explore nearby but seldom-visited places produces a new awareness of the communities we live in. We also discovered some unsuspected avian neighbors. An MBBS gets the blah out of summer birding.

As participants vied to pick the corner of Orange County that fascinated them the most and then scouted and ran their routes early on Sunday mornings in June, we all felt like we had developed some new connections with our neighborhoods. By getting off our beaten paths, we also

found unsuspected numbers of grassland species, such as Grasshopper Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks, lurking in Orange County fields. We also located a Chuck-will's-widow and a Baltimore Oriole, both marginally beyond their usual ranges.

Of course, not all species are equally likely to be counted in a roadside survey. Conspicuous birds of open country, like American Crows, probably seldom escape detection. Denizens of large forests, many of which are feeding young by late May and thus singing less, are under represented. Nevertheless, our first MBBS detected Louisiana Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Hooded Warbler -- but missed Kentucky Warbler.

Another source of concern, differences among observers, is also not so serious as it might seem. First, we allowed people to count in teams of two, if they desired (a departure from the national BBS in which there is only one observer counting), and this team approach pulled in a lot of observers we wouldn't otherwise have attracted. (Of our total of 12 routes, four were run by single participants and eight by teams of two.) Second, we assume that, just as in the national BBS, our MBBS will work best if people keep the same routes from year to year. The important thing is to get started and let participants build confidence and form an attachment to their routes.

How did we set up the routes? The first step was to divide Orange County into six more or less equal parts (with evenly spaced north-south and east-west lines). Then, I used a ruler to mark north-south and east-west coordinates along the edges of the map (actually I just laid two rulers vertically and horizontally along the edges of the map). With a random numbers table, I then picked random X and Y coordinates within the county until I had one in each sixth of the map. The next step was to find a route on public secondary roads (no state or federal numbered highways) that lay within each sixth of the county and that passed as close as possible to the random point in

that sixth. The last step was to find a second route in each sixth that as nearly as possible bisected the first one and ran perpendicular to it.

No attempt was made to choose routes that passed favorite spots or avoided certain areas (such as urban areas). We wanted to know all about the County's breeding birds -- urban, suburban, and rural. Each route was 10 miles long. Dividing Orange County into sixths created areas that were just about the right size to enclose 10-mile-long routes. A bigger or smaller county might need more or fewer subdivisions. This entire procedure for selecting routes, of course, only needs to be done once. As in the national BBS, we will use the same routes year after year.

Why randomly selected routes? Why not have every participant choose a favorite route? One answer is that, by randomly choosing our routes, we could credibly claim that we were getting information about our breeding birds that was at least free of our own biases. Like the national Breeding Bird Survey, we wanted to collect some scientific data about our populations of breeding birds. Another good answer is that favorite birding spots lose their luster during the summer doldrums. Since breeding birds generally stay put, even the usual hot spots lose the excitement of the chase. What better way to put some excitement back into summer birding than to strike out in seldom-visited territory?

Like the national survey, we ran each route once, starting 30 mins before sunrise (which the U. S. Naval Observatory will calculate for you on their web site) on a Sunday morning in late May or June. Every 0.5 mile by the odometer, we stopped at a convenient spot, got out of the car, and counted all birds seen or heard for exactly 3 minutes (or longer if traffic made it impossible to hear or concentrate for part of the time). We did not count birds more than a quarter of a mile away (half the distance to the next stop). If there was not a safe place to stop at the

(continued on next page)

MBBS (continued from previous page)

designated odometer reading, we continued until the first place that permitted a safe stop. And so on for 20 stops -- 9.5 miles from start to finish -- or a little more if the locations of a few stops needed adjustment. It took about two hours to finish a route, from door to door. Since this was the first-ever survey, scouting the routes a day or two ahead of the actual count day helped participants have a successful count, because we then knew in advance where our stops would be and could change the stops to avoid hazards such as busy intersections or the absence of any road shoulder.

We introduced one important innovation that differed from the national BBS. At each stop we classified the habitat on each side of the road into one of several broad categories. For our neck of the woods, we recognized (1) forest dominated by pines, (2) forest dominated by hardwoods, (3) fields (including trees and bushes along edges), and (4) buildings and associated habitats (lawns, trees). We also noted the presence of nearby water (lake or stream), but aquatic habitats were not frequent nor extensive enough in Orange County to warrant their

own category. Over the years, the MBBS will thus accumulate information about changes in land use in the County and any associated changes in breeding birds.

What do you do with the data? A volunteer willing to spend a few hours each year has to assemble information, preferably in a computerized spreadsheet. This project is ideal for a local club. I set up spreadsheets in Microsoft Excel and also converted them to simple web pages, so everyone could see the results. The web site also has a digitized a map of the routes. Take a look at <http://www.unc.edu/~rhwiley/mbbs>. (E-mail and our web site were essential to organizing the Orange County MBBS and disseminating information quickly. Our participants came from all over the Triangle, and all but one had e-mail. We used the listserv Carolinabirds to help recruit participants.)

What will we do differently in the future? The format for recording our observations at each stop was not easy to standardize. Observers had different preferences -- some more convenient for the compiler than others! The web site has some alternative sheets for recording observations. In addition, we agreed that a sign in your car window with big letters

"Bird Survey" or a call to the sheriff's department in advance is a good idea. Several of us met officers from the sheriff's department, patrolling the roads early in the morning, but encountered nothing but friendly inquiries.

Will a MBBS divert attention from the national BBS? I doubt it. We discovered that many of us feel comfortable working close to home on a short route but hesitate to take on a national route. Perhaps in time, as participants gain confidence, a local MBBS will actually generate some additional volunteers for the more ambitious and distant national routes!

Why are they so much fun? It's a mystery! We were all surprised. We barely finished our first MBBS of Orange County before we laid plans to take on Chatham County next year. Once a summer isn't enough!

Orange County MBBS participants in 1999: Barb Brooks (3 routes), Kate Finlayson, Karen Piplani, Kent Fiala, Will Cook (2 routes, with Rachel Harden as recorder on one), Marsha Stephens, Shantanu Phukan, Judy Murray, Robin Moran, Betty King (with her husband as driver and timer), Haven and Minna Wiley, and Ginger Travis.

Operation Rubythroat is Up and Humming!



Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History is pleased to announce a new crossdisciplinary international science education project called OPERATION RUBYTHROAT, and its associated website at <http://www.rubythroat.org>.

The project is based upon several years of pondering how to link students in the U.S. and Canada with peers in Mexico and Central America, using a common species--the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*)--as the focus. Operation RubyThroat is also intended as a way to stimulate U.S. students and teachers to relate ornithology to other scientific disciplines--and to non-science areas such as art, drama, geography, music, and creative writing.

I am hopeful you will have a chance to browse the website and provide preliminary feedback concerning its

educational validity and scientific accuracy. It is not intended to supplant or compete with any existing hummingbird project or website, but rather to selectively aim at a target audience of K-16 teachers and students in the Western Hemisphere, exciting them about natural history and science learning and building collaboration on conservation issues.

Nonetheless, Operation RubyThroat also encourages participation by home-schooled students, nature center personnel, scout leaders, individual young people and adults, and others who share an interest in Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. To that end, there is considerable information about hummingbird banding, hummingbird gardens, and related topics.

Please take a look at the website, make a posting to the Guestbook, and--if you like--become a registered participant in

support of Operation RubyThroat.

Also please know that the project--and the website--are a "work in progress" and that I am open to constructive suggestions for fine-tuning its components, shifting its directions, and implementing its goals. If you have comments in that regard, please send them and any corrections to me via <hilton@rubythroat.org> (NOT to bhilton@infoave.net).

I'm quite excited about the potential of Operation RubyThroat. I hope you will be, too, and that you will pass this information on to teachers and students and hummingbird fans that you know. Place a browser bookmark at <http://www.rubythroat.org> and revisit often to watch us grow!

Happy Hummingbird Watching!

Bill Hilton Jr.

Membership Application and Order Form

Name _____ Address _____

(List individual member first then any associate members.)

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

E-mail address _____

Enter/Renew Membership As Indicated:

Send Materials Indicated:

____ Individual (and non-profits) (\$20)	____ Patron (\$50 up)	____ CBC Cloth arm patch \$2.00 ea.
____ Associate (in household w/ind) (\$5)	____ Life (\$400)	____ CBC Decals (vinyl stick-on) \$2.00 ea., \$1.75 ea. in quantity
____ Student (\$15)	(4 installments of \$100)	____ Checklists 10/\$1.75, 25/\$5, 50/\$9.50, 75/\$12.75, 100/\$16
____ Sustaining (and businesses) (\$25)		

Make check payable to **Carolina Bird Club, Inc.** and mail to 11 W. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601-1029

Motel Reservation Form

Carolina Bird Club Winter Meeting, January 28-30, 2000

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please reserve a room for me at the Carolina Bird Club meeting rate of \$74.46 including tax. Arrival _____ Departure _____
My check for the first night's lodging is enclosed.

Mail with deposit to **Holiday Inn**, P.O. Box 1008, U.S. Highway 21, Beaufort, SC 29902 or call (843) 524-2144

Meeting Registration Form

CBC Winter Meeting, January 28-30, 2000

Name(s) _____

(list each name for name tags)

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____ (day) (____) _____ (evening) e-mail _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ member registrations at \$10 each and _____ nonmember registrations at \$20 each. Registration at the meeting will be \$20 for members or nonmembers.

Field Trip Registration

In the form below please indicate by Trip Number your choice of field trips. If registering for more than one person write the first name with each choice. Note that Trips #6, 15, 22 and 30 require a \$5 fee payable at the meeting.

Friday (morning or all-day) Friday (afternoon) Saturday (morning or all-day) Saturday (afternoon)

Mail with check to **Carolina Bird Club, Inc.**, 11 W. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601-1029

Carolina Bird Club, Inc.



11 W. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601-1029

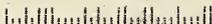
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Welcome New Members

Nancy Barton
Columbia, SC

W. H. Chance, Jr.
Winston-Salem, NC

Fran Colinet
Sumter, SC

Dr. Jil Franing
Chapel Hill, NC

Jo & Grady Coldston
Mt. Gilead, NC

Robert & Lois Herring
Chapel Hill, NC

Tom & Cat Monaghan
Greer, SC

Annette Rathbun
Rector, PA

W. C. Robbins
Boone, NC

Ann Waters
Augusta, GA

Scott Yarbro
Charlotte, NC

Floyd (continued from page 1)

South Carolina trips and **Gail Lankford** will plan North Carolina trips.

Certificates of Appreciation

Many people in North and South Carolina have shown their generosity to birders. The CBC executive committee is beginning a new program to recognize and thank those who have gone the extra step to help birders see birds.

Judy Walker and **Bill and Anita Hooker** were the first recipients of a "thank you certificate" from the CBC. Both Judy and the Hookers welcomed birders to their homes to see rare birds this year. Judy had nearly 100 birders at her home during all hours of the day to see an

Anna's Hummingbird that had taken up residence at her home in Charlotte.

The Hookers were the hosts to a Sandhill Crane this summer and welcomed any birder who came to wait out the bird's arrival to ponds at their home near Shelby.

The CBC and its members appreciate anyone who helps them see birds. If someone you know has gone the extra step to help CBC members let a member of the board know who they are and why they might deserve to be the next recipient of a "thank you certificate."

Generous gift to Red Cross

While CBC members enjoyed a weekend of birding their thoughts were not removed from the disaster Hurricane Floyd and its floods caused in both Carolinas. And those who attended the Charleston meeting put their money where their hearts were. A collection taken Friday and Saturday nights brought in more than \$1,700 which was sent to the American Red Cross to help flood victims. Every CBC member who contributed to the collection should be commended for their generosity.