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CBC Newsletter

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For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

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Number 4

CBC Fall Meeting - Hickory, North Carolina September 25-27



What do you think of when Hickory, North Carolina is mentioned? A national leader in furniture manufacturing? High-tech home to one of the world's largest fiber optic makers? A pleasant town at the foothills of the beautiful Blue Ridge? Hickory is many things to many people, but to birders, Hickory makes for an excellent base from which to explore the foothills and nearby mountains for fall migrants and resident avifauna. At an altitude of 1,148 feet, the town of nearly 40,000 residents provides plenty of entertainment, eating, and shopping opportunities for birders and non-birding friends. Make your plans now to join members of the Carolina Bird Club for the final general meeting of 2009, to be held September 25-27. Details on field trips and social events are in this edition of the Newsletter, and the registration form is located on page seven.

This will be the second time the CBC meeting has been in Hickory since 2003. During the last meeting, participants were successful in recording over 120 species of birds. Highlights included Black-billed Cuckoo, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, and Red Crossbill. Who knows what will be found this year, but you can bet with more than a hundred pairs of eyes in the field, something flashy is sure to turn up. Even without a rare or uncommon find, spending a few hours with the flocks of southbound migrants, early wintering birds, and resident species should be most enjoyable.

In addition to traditional hot spots, several "new" locations such as the Lenoir Greenway (very good for fall migrants) and several new parks in and around Catawba County are on the field trip schedule. There will also be trips to old favorites like Riverbend and Bakers Mountain Parks and Ridge Junction Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway, which is somewhat famous now as "the place" to see scores of migrants from the comfort of a lawn chair.

The fun continues into the evening hours with programs both Friday and Saturday nights. On Friday, Curtis Smalling from NC Audubon is scheduled to give a presentation on the beautiful Golden-winged Warbler. Saturday night Susan Campbell is on the slate to speak to us about her ten-plus years as a hummingbird researcher in North Carolina.

The headquarters for the meeting will be the Park Inn Gateway Conference Center at 909 US Hwy 70 SW, Hickory, NC 28602. The phone number for reservations is 1-800-789-0686 or 828-328-5101. The rate will be \$68.00 plus tax. Please let them know you are attending the CBC meeting. Note that the Park Inn's rooms are all non-smoking. Rooms feature hairdryers and coffee makers.

Make plans to enjoy a buffet dinner with new and old friends on Saturday night before the evening program.

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A Birder's Book Review

Steve Shultz



The North Carolina Birding Trail Mountain Trail Guide
ISBN 978-0-8078-5965-0
192 pages, spiral bound, 2009

The North Carolina Birding Trail Mountain Trail Guide is hot off the press and should be available now. The *Mountain Trail Guide* describes 105 sites in the “mountain region”, which for the purposes of the guide, covers areas in North Carolina west of Interstate 77. Note that the geographical divisions as defined by each of the guides do not necessarily reflect the actual terrain “on the ground”. For example, the *Mountain Trail Guide* covers the western suburbs of the Charlotte area as well as sites that are also in the Piedmont such as those in Cleveland and Gaston Counties. In order to separate the state into thirds for the guides, Interstates 95 and 77 were used as dividing points. Consequently, birders living near, or visiting areas close to, either of these freeways may find having both the guide book that covers the area west of, and east of, each dividing line to be of benefit.

As with the sister coast and Piedmont books, the *Mountain Trail Guide* provides an introductory chapter that gives an overview of the region, lists birding resources in print and online that may be useful for visiting birders, suggests a code of ethics that visitors to birding sites should consider, and provides hints to make a visit to any of the birding sites more successful.

The 105 sites covered by the guide are grouped into eighteen “clusters”. Sites may be visited in any order, and clusters may be combined to create custom travel routes that can be started from any point on the trail.

Each chapter describing a cluster provides an overview of the grouping that highlights areas of particular interest. A map is provided for each grouping, but be aware that the guide is best used in conjunction with a state road map or atlas, as the maps in the trail guides are necessarily less detailed than may be required to effectively commute from place to place. GPS coordinates and DeLorme (NC Gazetteer) page numbers are provided for each site to allow users of these tools

easy reference.

Each site generally receives one page of coverage that includes address, phone number, operational hours (if any), a paragraph or two describing the site, a short listing of species of interest, a short description of the habitats encountered, access and parking details, and brief directions to the site. Icons at the heading of each site description provide a quick visual reference of amenities such as restroom availability, handicapped access, presence of hunting in season, and whether or not a fee is charged to visit the site.

Beautiful photographs taken primarily by Carolina birders and photographers are liberally placed on nearly every page. From one perspective, the *Mountain Trail Guide* is worth the purchase price just to browse through the stunning photographs. Like its predecessors, the *Mountain Trail Guide* is visually appealing, providing the information in a Madison Avenue-worthy package and using color coding to differentiate each grouping.

Occasionally a species listed in a “species of interest” section may not be easy to find, or present outside of narrow time periods such as spring or fall migration, but the site descriptions provide a useful listing of birds so that visitors know generally what to expect. As with nearly all birding trail guides, the *Mountain Trail Guide* is best used in conjunction with a good field guide or book such as *Birds of the Carolinas* that provides more specific distribution and occurrence information for each species of bird.

With the release of the *Mountain Trail Guide*, The North Carolina Birding Trail guide book set is complete. Those who worked to make this project a reality can be proud that they created a world-class birding trail that may well be the envy of many states looking to provide a similar resource. Three cheers to a job well done!

The *Mountain Trail Guide*, as well as the coast and Piedmont guides can be purchased from the NC Wild Store at www.ncwildstore.com or at your favorite birding retailer.

Meet Your Executive Committee: Dwayne Martin



This is the second in an occasional series intended to provide a more personal look at the folks who volunteer for Executive Committee (EC) positions for the Carolina Bird Club. EC members serve various roles for the Club, but the one thing all have in common is a love of birds and willingness to volunteer time and effort. EC members help to ensure that the organization remains true to its charter and by-laws, and try to provide members with the best services and opportunities possible.

Today we meet with Dwayne Martin, Western North Carolina Vice-President. Dwayne is completing Taylor Piephoff's term as Western NC Vice-President. This term will end in 2010.

Newsletter: What is the most enjoyable part of being on the Executive Committee?

Dwayne: Being able to help guide the direction the club goes in

Newsletter: What is your favorite species of bird that breeds in the Carolinas?

Dwayne: Anyone who knows me, knows it's the Red Crossbill. I even have a photo of one as my background on the screen of my phone.

Newsletter: Please describe your favorite birding moment.

Dwayne: It would be Ridge Junction Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway one late August morning in 1998. There were literally thousands of migrants pouring through the gap. I will never forget that morning!

Newsletter: What is your favorite birding field guide?

Dwayne: Sibley Guide east and west. I keep them both in my car.

Newsletter: What is your favorite birding/natural history book (not including field guides)?

Dwayne: Kingbird Highway by Kenn Kaufman

Newsletter: Do you keep birding lists? If so, how many?

Dwayne: Yes. Life, state, county, and Riverbend Park (I work there, so I have to!)

Newsletter: What is your favorite birding location in the Carolinas?

Dwayne: Ridge Junction Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway during the fall, and Mt. Mitchell.

Newsletter: What is your favorite birding location outside of the Carolinas?

Dwayne: Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Southeastern Arizona

Newsletter: What advice would you have for a young birder just getting started in the hobby?

Dwayne: Have as much fun doing it as you can.

Newsletter: What species tops your list of 'most wanted'?

Dwayne: Several of the Boreal species like Bohemian Waxwing and Spruce Grouse.

Newsletter: Do you have a 'nemesis' bird? If so, what is it?

Dwayne: Spruce Grouse. Have looked for that bird several times and have not found one yet.

Newsletter: What do you feel is the most important issue regarding the future of birding?

Dwayne: The continuing decline of bird populations

Newsletter: Thanks, Dwayne, for taking to time to share some of your birding experiences.

Dwayne's most recent efforts in volunteering for the Club include the mighty task of organizing the fall Hickory meeting in September. If you see him in Hickory, please stop by and extend a word of appreciation for all of his hard work in planning and executing the meeting.

Please join me in thanking Dwayne for his willingness to step into the Vice-President role vacated by Taylor Piephoff upon his election to President, and for Dwayne's volunteer efforts as a NC Member-at-Large prior to that. Here's hoping the next trip to Whitefish Point nets Dwayne nice looks at a Spruce Grouse!

Hickory Fall Meeting Field Trip Schedule and Descriptions



Friday, September 25

Morning Half-Day Trips

- Trip 1 - Riverbend Park - 7:30 AM
- Trip 2 - Bakers Mountain Park - 7:40 AM
- Trip 3 - Hickory City Parks - 7:20 AM
- Trip 4 - Wagner Property - 7:00 AM
- Trip 5 - Lenoir Greenway - 7:10 AM

Afternoon Half-Day Trips

- Trip 6 - Vale/Plateau Area - 1:30 PM
- Trip 7 - Catawba River Greenway - 1:00 PM
- Trip 8 - Wagner Property - 1:10 PM
- Trip 9 - Lakeside Park - 1:20 PM
- Trip 24 - Hickory City Parks - 1:40 PM

Full Day Trips

- Trip 10 - Ridge Junction Overlook - 5:00 AM
- Trip 11 - Yadkin River Greenway/W. Kerr Scott Reservoir - 7:00 AM

Saturday, September 26

Morning Half-Day Trips

- Trip 12 - Catawba River Greenway - 7:20 AM
- Trip 13 - Wagner Property - 7:00 AM
- Trip 14 - Riverbend Park - 7:30 AM
- Trip 15 - Bakers Mountain Park - 7:50 AM
- Trip 16 - Lenoir Greenway - 7:10 AM
- Trip 25 - Hickory City Parks - 7:40 AM

Afternoon Half-Day Trips

- Trip 17 - South Mountains State Park - 1:00 PM
- Trip 18 - Wagner Property - 1:10 PM
- Trip 19 - Lakeside Park - 1:40 PM
- Trip 20 - Vale/Plateau Area - 1:20 PM
- Trip 26 - Riverbend Park - 1:30 PM

Full Day Trips

- Trip 21 - Ridge Junction Overlook - 5:00 AM
- Trip 22 - Catawba County Hotspots - 8:00 AM
- Trip 23 - Boone and the High Country - 7:00 AM

Trips 1, 14, and 26: Riverbend Park

Riverbend Park is a 450-acre passive park operated by Catawba County. With its mile of shoreline along the Catawba River, it is a wonderful place to see fall migrants. There have been 190 species seen at Riverbend Park so far! We will expect to find lots of warblers, vireos and flycatchers. Olive-sided Flycatchers have been spotted during fall in past years near the park office, and a pair of Bald Eagles nest nearby and fly over often. It will be a relatively easy hike along the River Trail and depending on time, we may return to the parking lot through a stand of mature American Beech to look for more migrants.

Trips 2, 15: Bakers Mountain Park

Standing high above the Catawba Valley at 1,780 feet, Bakers Mountain Park offers some of the best bird watching in the Piedmont. The mountain is a beacon for migrating songbirds because of its height above the surrounding landscape and the amount of forest cover it has. The best part is---you do not even have to leave the parking area to see such beautiful and breathtaking birds like the Black-throated Blue Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Hooded Warbler and many others! The park is a 189-acre property on the north side of

Bakers Mountain, and is operated by Catawba County. From the observation platform located near the top of the mountain, we will look for migrating raptors. Golden Eagles have been seen several times during the fall, along with hundreds of Broad-winged Hawks!

Trips 3, 24, 25: Hickory City Parks

Glenn R. Hilton Park is a 59.5-acre park operated by the City of Hickory and can be one of the best birding spots in the area. Twenty-two warbler species have been seen in a single day in late September, after the passing of a cold front. We will hope for something like a Connecticut, Cerulean, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Nashville, or Wilson's Warbler. The boardwalk trail is often a great spot for viewing migrating songbirds, wading birds, and raptors. At the furthest point on the loop is an observation platform adjacent to a cove of Lake Hickory. We will also bird along an adjacent bikeway between Hickory City and Geitner Parks. This will be an easy walk and most of it is ADA accessible.

Trips 4, 8, 13, 18: Wagner Property

This is, easily, one of the best birding spots in our

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Hickory Fall Meeting Field Trip Descriptions

(Continued from page 4)

area. Located in Happy Valley, NC, it is private property and will be generously opened up to us again for the CBC meeting. The property is an old pea gravel mining operation and has wetlands galore in several stages of growth. This is also a great spot to find shorebirds! Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and others are regular visitors. White-crowned Sparrow, Swainson's Warbler, American Bittern, and American Woodcock have all been seen in recent falls. This will be a relatively easy walk, although parts of it may be through tall grass.

Trips 5, 16: Lenoir Greenway

The Lenoir Greenway includes seven paved miles of trails, spreading over 25 acres of land. The greenway passes through a variety of habitats, ranging from streamside bottomlands to open fields to early successional growth. We will look for migrating songbirds along the streamside section and should see a good variety of warblers, vireos, and tanagers! We will also stop at Parkway Bank in Lenoir, NC to visit the Foot-hills Bird Club's official hawk watch location. Last year, in one day, over 10,000 Broad-winged Hawks were counted as they passed over this location! This will be an easy walk and is ADA accessible.

Trips 6, 20: Vale/Plateau Area

This area is still very rural and filled with farms and hayfields. We will look for grassland species like Grasshopper Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, and Bobolink before visiting several properties to look for woodland migrants. Mardell's Nature Preserve has a mile-long walking trail that winds through a 25-acre tract and has a reputation for producing sightings of the elusive American Woodcock! At the other property, we will look for warblers, vireos, and thrushes. This should be relatively easy walking and some birding will be done from the car.

Trips 7, 12: Catawba River Greenway

The Catawba River and Freedom Trail Greenways are paved trails that follow more than four linear miles of the Catawba River in Morganton and encompass more than 250 acres of land. This is a beautiful area near the headwaters of the river, and we should see lots of warblers and vireos. Blue-headed, Red-eyed, Yellow-

throated, Philadelphia, and White-eyed Vireos have all been seen here in the fall. Waterfowl are also a possibility here. This is an easy walk and is ADA accessible.

Trips 9, 19: Lakeside Park

Lakeside Park is a relatively new 73-acre park at the edge of scenic Lake Rhodhiss that is operated by the town of Granite Falls. The one-mile nature trail provides the best birding opportunities at the park. During fall migration, we will scan the trees and shoreline for migrating songbirds such as Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, and Eastern Kingbird. There are several viewing platforms overlooking the lake that make great vantage points for viewing over the water where we'll look for Osprey and Bald Eagle.

Trips 10, 21: Ridge Junction Overlook

Birding from a chair. No kidding!!! While the pre-dawn drive to this scenic overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway may not be everyone's cup of tea, the continuous stream of birds and a sunrise that takes your breath away is well worth it! We will leave the hotel at 5 a.m. in order to be in place when the sun rises and the drama begins. (At this early hour, we do have a chance at seeing a Black Bear while driving up the Parkway too!) Situated at a unique spot in the Black Mountains, Ridge Junction Overlook is the "low" point in the "J" shaped chain and acts as a funnel for southbound migrants. On good days, there could be several hundred migrants seen in small groups making their way through the tree line, all visible from your chair. On great days---well, let's just say it will knock your socks off! We will have lunch at the restaurant at Mt. Mitchell State Park and look for Red Crossbills while we are there. We will then return via Curtis Creek Road to look for more migrants.

Trip 11: Yadkin River Greenway and W. Kerr Scott Reservoir

We will begin our day at the Yadkin River Greenway with its paved trail system and nice mix of riparian zones and other habitats. Fall can be a very good time to visit, with a wide variety of migrating songbirds and shorebirds. Recently, Upland Sandpiper and Buff-breasted Sandpiper have been observed in the

(Continued on page 6)

Hickory Fall Meeting Field Descriptions

(Continued from page 5)

recreational fields by the YMCA access, along with scores of Killdeer and Canada Geese. We will also visit the picturesque W. Kerr Scott Reservoir to search for vireos and warblers along some of the lesser-driven back roads near the lake. We will also visit Mountain View Overlook to look for migrating raptors and then, if time permits, stop by the Wilkes Community College Gardens and adjoining pond on our way back.

Trip 17: South Mountains State Park

With 18,000 acres and elevations ranging from 1,200 to 3,000 feet, South Mountains State Park is among one of the most diverse ecosystems in the state. Lots of warblers, tanagers and vireos make their way south through this area and can be seen along the beautiful trail to High Shoals Falls. Pine Siskin, Worm-eating Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler are among the species we will be looking for. The spectacular 80-foot waterfall makes the trip worthwhile—even if you do not see a single bird! This is a moderately strenuous hike with many sets of stairs to the top.

Trip 22: Catawba County Hotspots

We will search all the best spots in Catawba County to find the best birds our area has to offer! We will be visiting such places as the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge, Murray's Mill, and area lake accesses. We will specifically be looking for Loggerhead Shrike, Eurasian-collared Dove, Black Tern, and much, much more. This will be mostly birding from the car, so carpooling is highly encouraged. Last time we had this trip, we turned up a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher! Who knows what this year will hold?

Trip 23: Boone and the High Country

This trip will focus on some of the less "touristy" parts of the High Country. We will drive through the high-elevation grasslands on Rich Mountain to look for Vesper and Savannah Sparrows before turning our attention to Valle Crucis Park. This small park provides great birding opportunities along the Watauga River and the small wetlands near the pond. Orchard and Baltimore Orioles and Black-billed Cuckoos will be on our watch list. Several other spots will be explored before returning to Hickory.

Hickory Meeting (continued)



(Continued from page 1)

The meal includes a choice of two meats, three vegetables/starches, salad, rolls and butter, coffee and tea, and choice of one dessert, either banana pudding or cobbler (Apple, Peach or Cherry). The cost of the meal is \$18 per person (includes tax and tip) and can be paid with the meeting registration.

To pre-register for the meeting, field trips, and optional buffet dinner, complete the registration form on page seven.

All field trips will leave from the headquarters hotel and will utilize carpooling. We will try to combine into as few cars as possible, so if you have room for others, or if you desire to ride along with someone else, notify your field trip leader prior to departure. Field trips may be limited as to the number of partici-

pants in order to ensure a quality experience for all. In order to avoid disappointment, consider registering early to have the best chance at participating in your first choice of trips. The registration form includes spaces to designate a second choice in case your first choice is full. Fall migration is a wonderful time of year, especially in the foothills. Please make plans to attend the fall meeting in Hickory, and we look forward to seeing you there!

The opinions expressed in the CBC Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Carolina Bird Club or its members, but are those of the authors who have contributed material. All CBC members are encouraged to submit content for publication. Submitted articles may be edited for style, content, or length prior to publication. Submissions may be made in electronic format to newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org, or by mail to the address on the back cover.

CBC Fall Meeting and Field Trip Registration Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Email _____

Fall 2009 Meeting

Meeting Registration (Member) _____ x \$15 = \$ _____

Meeting Registration (Non-member) _____ x \$20 = \$ _____

Saturday Buffet Dinner (each) _____ x \$18 = \$ _____

*To pre-register for field trips, place the trip number(s) in the boxes to the right. Check the CBC website for any changes or updates to trips (www.carolinabirdclub.org)

Field Trip Sign-Up	A.M. 1st/2nd Choice	P.M. 1st/2nd Choice	All Day 1st/2nd Choice
Friday	/	/	/
Saturday	/	/	/

Total = \$ _____

Club policy requires all field trip participants to comply with the field trip leader's assessment and requests concerning the physical ability of each participant to make or complete the trip. Meeting registration at the door costs \$25.

I release and discharge (and will not make a claim against) the Carolina Bird Club for injury, death, or property damage arising from my participation at this meeting and/or Club field trips. This release of liability is entered into on behalf of all members of my family, including all minors accompanying me. I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of any such minors and that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature _____ Date _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club and send to: CBC, 353 Montabello, Bloomingdale, IL 60108

Please update my address or other contact information as listed above

CBC Co-sponsors 13th Annual Wings Over Water Festival

The 13th annual Wings Over Water Festival, headquartered along North Carolina's scenic Outer Banks, is scheduled for November 3-8, 2009.

The Carolina Bird Club, along with the Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Roanoke Island Festival Park, and the Outer Banks Sentinel sponsor this year's edition of the festival celebrating nature and the outdoors.

As in past years, the event features a number of opportunities for birders, photographers, and nature enthusiasts to experience the Outer Banks and mainland areas of eastern North Carolina. Birding trips to famous locations such as Oregon Inlet, Cape Hatteras, Bodie Island Lighthouse, Alligator River NWR, and others are joined by new offerings including trips to the Roanoke Island marshes, a pair of pelagic trips, and a program

that focuses on the Outer Banks' role in providing a stopover and wintering destination for migratory birds.

The Friday evening keynote speech is scheduled to be presented by award-winning nature photographer Mark Buckler. Photographers may be especially interested in learning how to hone their technique, but all should be impressed at the beautiful images captured by Buckler, many along the Outer Banks. In conjunction with the keynote speech, Buckler will be leading an expanded offering of wildlife photography seminars during the festival.

Registration information, including field trip descriptions, fees, and times, is available at the Wings Over Water website: www.wingsoverwater.org, or by calling 252-216-WING(9464). Hope to see you there!



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Upcoming CBC Meetings

Hickory, NC September 25-27, 2009
 Coastal NC January 29-31, 2010

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Membership dues of \$20 include \$4 for a subscription to *CBC Newsletter* and \$5 for a subscription to *The Chat*. Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$2.50, 25@\$6, 50@\$11.75, 75@\$17.75, and 100@\$23.50. Submit application for membership, change of address, and payment for checklists to: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 6325 Falls of the Neuse Road, STE 9 PMB 150, Raleigh, NC 27615. Copyright © 2009.

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