



## Special Event

**The Carolina Bird Club** will be returning to the Sandhills for their 2008 Spring Meeting: May 1 – 4. It has been seven years since the Club met in our area. Naturally, SNHS will be providing local support for the event. Very shortly we will be forming a committee to begin planning field trips and other weekend events. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Susan Campbell at [susan@ncaves.com](mailto:susan@ncaves.com) or 910 949-3207.

## 2007 Meetings

<b>Monday, July 23</b>	Susan Campbell – Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in North Carolina
<b>Monday, August 27</b>	John Connors – Chimney Swifts
<b>Monday, September 24</b>	Jeff Irwin – Ft. Bragg Archeology
<b>Monday, October 22</b>	Beth Evans – Bats and Bat Research at Ft. Bragg
<b>Monday, November 26</b>	Dave Davenport – Galapagos Islands

Meeting Times: 7:00 p.m. - Fellowship & Socializing, 7:30 p.m. - Meeting and Program  
 Program Location: Weymouth Woods Visitors' Center Auditorium.  
 Phone 910-692-2167 for directions.

\*\*\*We normally meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month\*\*\*

## Upcoming Field Trips

**IMPORTANT:** *Call the field trip leader to register for a trip. Please call at least one day before the trip to ensure that the trip is still on schedule.*

**July 21**      **Cape Fear Kites and Beyond** – Meet at Wal-Mart at 6:00 a.m. for an all-day trip to look for kites, wood storks, and anhingas along the Cape Fear River. We will spend the morning stopping at various sites along the river. After lunch we will head south towards Sunset Beach/Twin Lakes to look for purple gallinules and roseate spoonbills. Bring everything you need for your personal comfort, including lunch. Plan on returning between 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Leader: Scott Hartley – 910-692-2167 or 910-944-9337.

**August 25**      **Stedman Sod Farm** – Meet at Wal-Mart parking lot at 6:00 a.m. We will spend one-half day exploring extensive open turf fields and the surrounding woodland. Perhaps we will see horned lark, pectoral sandpiper, and Wilson's snipe. This is a new location for SNHS to visit. Bring water, bug spray, binoculars, and a spotting scope if you have one. Leader: David McCloy – 910-692-5094.

**September 15**            **Calloway Tract Tour** – The official opening of the Calloway Roadside Park is at 10:00 a.m. followed by a guided tour at about 10:30 a.m. The Calloway Tract is 2,000 acres owned by The Nature Conservancy. Meet at the Calloway access on Highway 211 at 10:00 a.m. The access is east of McCain across from the intersection of Calloway Road and Highway 211. For more information call Mike Norris or Trip Leader: Rick Studenmund – 910-246-0300.

**September 22**            **Pilot Mountain Hawk Watch** – Meet at Wal-Mart at 6:00 a.m. for an all-day trip to Pilot Mountain. Bring food, drink, and anything else you need for your personal comfort. The hawk watch site is only 200 – 300 yards from the parking area. Restrooms are available. Leader: Scott Hartley – 910-692-2167 or 910-944-9337.

**October 6**                **Pinehurst Greenway** – Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the FirstHealth Fitness Center parking lot on Memorial Drive at Highway 211. We will bird along the trail and cover about two miles checking for fall migrants, wildflowers, and butterflies. Leader: Carol Bowman – 910-690-9388.

**If you have other field trip ideas or would be willing to lead one, please contact Scott Hartley at 910-692-2167 or 910-944-9337.**

### **2007 Spring Bird Count**

The Spring Bird Count in Southern Pines was held Sunday, April 29. We had a record high number of both species and observers. During the course of the day 33 observers in 16 parties tallied 6740 individuals of some 140 species. Our fantastic day of birding was in spite of beautiful weather. Often, without some wind or rain, birding is more of a challenge – if one is attempting to encounter a diversity of species in the spring. But at daybreak it was beautiful with winds light out of the northwest and temperatures in the upper 50s. By late afternoon the mercury had risen just shy of 80 degrees and the winds had picked up with gusts around 18 mph. But the migrants and breeding bird species were abundant across the circle throughout the count.

A single male scissor-tailed flycatcher located at Hobby Field (presumably the breeding male for 2006) in Southern Pines was the biggest highlight. But there were plenty of uncommon migrants as well as lingering wintering species. Not only were four different pied-billed grebes found with one being on Thagard Lake in Whispering Pines and three at Woodlake, but a late horned grebe was also spotted at Woodlake. A female yellow-bellied sapsucker was found foraging just outside Whispering Pines. Notable migrant warbler species included: chestnut-sided and cerulean at Weymouth Woods State Nature Preserve and a Nashville in Vass. Despite the late date, most parties were able to find numerous white-throated sparrows, yellow-rumped warblers and ruby-crowned kinglets. Conversely, late migrants such as yellow-billed cuckoo, common nighthawk and blackpoll warbler turned up in more than one area.

As usual, the party at Woodlake reported the highest species total - 97. Lake Surf, the largest lake in the county, at this site provides a variety of habitat unequaled in other parts of the circle. However, it is impressive that this year over half of the areas turned up some 70 to 80 species by the end of the day. It is quite likely that the nice weather increased our effort in the field overall.

We were very grateful to return to the newly renovated facilities at Weymouth Woods for our midday countdown. Thanks also go to Michael McCloy, who compiled all of the count data again this spring. Participants in the count were: Rex Badgett, Brady Beck, Jeff Beane, Carol Bowman, Kerry Brust, Susan Campbell, Jay Carter, Dick and Lois Dole, John Finnegan, Scott Hartley, Linda and Charlie Jones, David and Michael McCloy, Carolyn McDermott and Fred Shuker, Dan Pieroni, Todd Pusser, Lisa Richman, Patrick Shaffner, Bruce Sorrie, Lowell and Susan Strine, and Rosalyn Walk, as well as Charlotte Gantz, Mary Stephenson, Vaud Travis, and Libba Watson at feeders. (Susan Campbell)

## Trip Reports

### Beidler Forest – April 14

If you ever wanted to study the differences among banded water snakes, brown water snakes, cottonmouths, and redbelly water snakes from the safety of a boardwalk, Francis Beidler Forest/Four Holes Swamp in Dorchester Co., SC is the place to go. It is also a good place to observe differences among eastern mud turtles, eastern musk turtles, “Florida cooters,” striped mud turtles, and yellow-bellied sliders.

Thirteen individuals from SNHS, including the co-leaders, Jeff Beane and Todd Pusser, marveled at the beauty and species diversity of the area. Prothonotary warblers especially were easily seen and heard along with hooded warblers, northern parulas, pine warblers, yellow-rumped warblers, and yellow-throated warblers. A total of 54 bird species were tallied. Atamasco lily and jack-in-the-pulpit were in bloom. Spruce pine was a new species for many individuals. Of special note at an open pond were the American alligator and bowfin and chain pickerel fishes.

No doubt SNHS will be doing a return trip next year. (David McCloy)

### Blue Ridge Parkway Birds, Blooms, and Bugs – May 26

It is becoming a tradition for SNHS to make a May pilgrimage to northwestern North Carolina along a portion of the Blue Ridge Parkway. This year the portion extended from Deep Gap south to Linville Falls. Trout Lake at Moses Cone Memorial Park, Julian Price Memorial Park, and Lynn Cove Viaduct were visited in between. There were four SNHS participants with Scott Hartley as the leader.

We tallied 67 bird species on the trip. Especially noteworthy were good looks at a singing alder flycatcher, a soaring juvenile bald eagle, old-time-named fire-throats or torch-birds (Blackburnian warblers), and two wild turkeys as well as a chorus of two or three veeries. This trip also provided a good opportunity to identify bird songs and calls, especially among the 12 warbler species that were seen and/or heard.

Several of the plant species we observed were an *Angelica*, a variety of daisy fleabane, a dogbane, false Solomon’s seal, elephant’s foot, fireweed, flaming azalea, golden ragwort, hay-scented fern, jack-in-the-pulpit, jewelweed, a lily (*Clintonia sp.*), a parsnip, rue anemone, Solomon’s seal, spicebush, a spiderwort, a *Trillium*, Turk’s cap lily, wild *Geranium*, and wild yam.

The butterfly species we observed were Appalachian tiger swallowtail, clouded sulfur, eastern tailed-blue, pearl crescent, and silver-spotted skipper. A stream channel at Moses Cone Memorial Park with partially flowing water provided the opportunity for us to overturn rocks. We discovered crayfish, crane fly larvae, mayfly larvae, an unidentified species of salamander, southern pygmy clubtail (a dragonfly), and stoneflies.

Needless to say, SNHS will be back again next year, if not at these locations, then elsewhere in the North Carolina Mountains. (David McCloy)

### Weymouth Woods 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Butterfly Count – June 9

Have you ever wondered how to tell the difference among the King’s hairstreak, Edwards’ hairstreak, gray hairstreak, banded hairstreak, and coral hairstreak butterflies? What does all of this have to do with New Jersey tea, a plant that was in bloom on June 9? What about the difference between the attenuated bluet and turquoise bluet damselflies or between the blue dasher and slaty skimmer dragonflies? When was the last time that you saw a blister beetle, an eastern hognose snake, or heard a Bachman’s sparrow?

Thirteen butterfly enthusiasts spent the morning of June 9 at Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve observing butterflies as part of an official North American Butterfly Association tally for that day. However, their interests weren't limited only to butterflies. As illustrated above, odonates, other insects, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and plants were also greatly enjoyed by the participants. (David McCloy)

## From the President's Desk: David McCloy

No excuses for not knowing where to bird! The North Carolina Birding Trail Coastal Plain Trail Guide is now available for \$10 through the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (<http://www.ncwildlife.org>). This trail guide is very well done and includes photographs from SNHS member, Brady Beck. The Piedmont Trail Guide is anticipated to be available next year (2008) and the Mountain Trail Guide the following year (2009).

The male and female scissor-tailed flycatchers are still at Hobby Field. They apparently re-nested once. One or both birds are usually easy to find in the early morning or late afternoon. Several SNHS members (Brady Beck, Carol Bowman, Susan Campbell, David Kilpatrick, and Michael McCloy) have been doing photographs and updates of these birds.

Several SNHS members attended the Carolina Bird Club (CBC) spring meeting at Hendersonville, NC on May 3-6 and the CBC-sponsored field trip to Shackelford Banks on May 19. In June SNHS members made various trips to see the snail kite in Clarendon County, SC. SNHS members were also involved with the Southern Pines Spring Migration bird count, breeding bird surveys, frog surveys, and butterfly counts in April, May, and June. Recent, local, and interesting bird sightings were a wood stork, an eastern juvenile red-tailed hawk, a nesting common nighthawk, and various nesting woodpeckers.

Very interesting monthly meetings and field trips are scheduled for the remainder of the summer and the fall and are detailed in this newsletter. Be sure not to miss out on the fun!

### *Of This and That.....*

**Xeriscape Workshop.** Please mark your calendars for our workshop on xeriscape gardening, to be held on Saturday, September 29, 2007, from 10:30 a.m. until noon at the Pinehurst Village Assembly Hall. The speaker, Arlene Hantjis, Master Gardener, will explain how xeriscape gardening is a cost effective method of landscaping to conserve water and fossil fuel energy. She will describe seven common sense steps for making a landscape more water-efficient. Mike Zihal, another Master Gardener, who is on the Water Conservation Committee, is working with her on this.

**Purple Martin Roost** – The purple martin roost on Lunch Island at Lake Murray (Lexington, SC) is in use from early July through mid-September. It peaks in early August at about 700,000 birds. Lake Murray Tours has purple martin cruises on Sunday and Monday nights in July and August. This 2 ½ hour cruise takes you out to historic Bomb Island, where hundreds of thousands of purple martins circle and roost on the largest purple martin sanctuary in North America. Cost is \$27.00 per person. Driving time to Lexington is approximately three hours via I-95. Call ahead for the latest status before going on the boat ride. Check out the web site at: <http://purplemartin.org/roost/roostdetail.php?roost=300>, and the Lake Murray Tour web site at: [www.lakemurraytours.com](http://www.lakemurraytours.com) and click on General Admission Cruises.

**NEW! We now have a Post Office box.** Send your annual membership dues (\$5 per person, payable to SNHS) to Beth Carpenter, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1472, Southern Pines, N.C. 28388-1472. Please include your address, telephone number, and e-mail address with your payment.

**Field Guides.** The first of three North Carolina Birding Trail (Coastal) guides is out and available from the NC Wild Store at: <http://nc-wildlife.stores.yahoo.net/nocabitrcopl.html>. The cost is \$10.00 plus tax.

For more information about the Birding Trail and when to expect the next guide (Piedmont) to be out, go to: <http://www.ncbirdingtrail.org>.

The Frogs and Toads of North Carolina field guide and CD is also available from the NC Wild store at: <http://nc-wildlife.stores.yahoo.net/frandtoofnoc.html>. The cost for this guide is \$15.00 plus tax. Many of the images in this guide were taken by our own Todd Pusser! (Brady Beck)

**The Sandhills Area Land Trust** is still raising funds to purchase Hobby Field and save it from development. During the summer, scissor-tailed flycatchers and grasshopper sparrows nest and fledge their young there. Please contact Katie Walsh at 910-638-8042 if you wish to assist with the purchase.

**Reminder!** Recycle your nature, birding or gardening magazines at each monthly meeting. There will be a table where you can drop off or pick up magazines of interest to our group. Contact Carol Bowman at 910-295-0842.

**NEW FROG** - A study in Suriname has discovered a purple fluorescent frog, one of 24 new species found in the South American highlands of the country. Go to <http://www.news.com.au/business/story/0.23636.21859307-31037.00.html> for more information and a picture of a really cool looking frog. (Marisa Back)

**WOOD STORK SIGHTED IN SOUTHERN PINES** – An immature wood stork was sighted by Susan Campbell on June 13, 2007. She saw it crossing Routes 15/501 near the old K-Mart parking lot. This is only the second record of wood stork for Moore County and the Sandhills; the first being in Whispering Pines in October, 2004.

## NOTE ✓

**SPECIAL SNHS MERCHANDISE OFFER TO MEMBERS** - *Lands' End* Company produced our beautiful embroidered logo for our SNHS caps. *Lands' End* will waive the standard minimum that they apply to all embroidered logo products through the end of this month. Without the added expense typical of production, we have arranged for members to choose from a variety of shirt styles, caps, or other merchandise that *Lands' End* offers (they even have logo beach towels!) Any item in available colors is offered to those interested in something beyond the basic tees we offer. Go to <http://ocs.landsend.com/corpsales> where you can peruse apparel and other merchandise. Please contact Kerry Brust at [kbrust@sandhillsecological.org](mailto:kbrust@sandhillsecological.org) by **27 July**. Once you have selected an item and color, and she will place the order for you. Be specific! For example, there are 14 different men's polo shirts. Members can subsequently reimburse the Club. Your cost will be the price of the item plus a \$5.50 logo application fee (normally \$11.00.)

**BUT WAIT! THERE'S MORE!!.....**

**TEES AND LANDS' END CAPS** – Additional baseball caps are in and t-shirts are now available in grey heather. SNHS merchandise can be purchased at Birdie's on Broad, 220 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines, and at Wild Birds Unlimited, Center Part Plaza near Harris Teeter, Route 1, Aberdeen. SNHS members enjoy a 10% discount at Birdie's and a 5% discount at WBU. Thanks to Birdie's owner, Donna Hefton, and WBU's owner, Bill Kastern, for supporting our club! Contact Kerry at 910-528-6958 if you have any questions.

- \$10 T-shirts
- \$17 Baseball Caps (with embroidered logo)
- \$14 Baseball Caps (with plain logo)
- \$12 Mugs
- \$ 3 Stickers

**SNHS Board of Directors 2007:**

<b>President</b>	David McCloy	<a href="mailto:david.mccloy@ncmail.net">david.mccloy@ncmail.net</a>
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C/o Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve  
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Southern Pines, NC 28387

**If you do not have email please read this:**

Our field trips often have schedule changes and we send out email updates to the membership. We suggest you ask a friend who receives these emails to keep you informed. You can also periodically call the field trip leader to get the latest updates.