

Flicker Flashes

Published by
The Birmingham Audubon Society

For conservation and greater knowledge
of birds, their habitat, and natural world

Audubon's Chief Scientist - **GARY LANGHAM** - Guest Speaker at Annual Banquet

Birds and Climate Change: Conservation Status of North American Birds

Gary Langham, Chief Scientist for National Audubon Society, will serve as the guest speaker for the 68th Birmingham Audubon Annual Banquet Dec. 4, sponsored by Protective Life Corporation and held at the Protective Life main campus on Highway 280. Langham will speak on "Birds and Climate Change: Conservation Status of North American Birds."



He has spent most of his life watching or studying animals across the Americas and Australia and received his Ph.D. from Cornell University. Langham enjoys sharing nature with his wife and six-year-old daughter in Washington, D.C.

Langham was appointed Chief Scientist for the National Audubon Society in June 2011. He previously served as the lead scientist for Audubon California for nearly five years. In that role, he worked to guide conservation planning, launch new projects, and provide project management. He worked closely with marketing, policy and development on statewide issues and was supervisor for many programs, including Important Bird Areas, Migratory Bird Conservation Program, Seabird Conservation, Landowner Stewardship Program, Kern River Preserve, Starr Ranch Sanctuary and Audubon Bobcat Ranch.

Langham led the team of Audubon ornithologists that reported 314 of 588 bird species are at risk due to climate change. Upon completion of the seven-year investigation, the team concluded that while some species will be able to adapt to shifting climates, many of the most familiar and iconic species will not. The team analyzed more than 40 years of historical North America climate data and millions of historical bird records from the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey and Audubon's Christmas Bird Count to project where birds will be likely able to survive and not survive in the future.

Langham directs Audubon's wide-reaching scientific initiatives and studies, including innovative climate modeling, extensive avian research and high-priority bird conservation. He grew up in a birding family and started attending Audubon chapter meetings at age seven.

Registration information appears in this issue of Flicker Flashes. Participants will again be able to register online in addition to completing and mailing their registration form. To learn more about the event, contact the Birmingham Audubon office at 205-714-8227 or visit www.birminghamaudubon.org

To read Audubon's recent story on Gary Langham, visit: <http://climate.audubon.org/article/flight-plan-birds-warming-world>.

Audubon Teaches Nature

Bird Coloration: Understanding the Beauty of Birds

Presented by **Geoffrey E. Hill, Guest Speaker**

Sunday, November 16, 2014 - 2 P.M. - Alabama Wildlife Center Auditorium

The introduction to Geoff Hill's book, "Bird Coloration," opens with this sentence, "The bold, brilliant and varied coloration of birds evokes both admiration and curiosity." Anyone who has ever seen the striking plumage of a male Painted Bunting or the stunning colors of a Scarlet Tanager knows this to be true.

Geoff Hill's program will address everything you ever wanted to know about coloration in birds, thus adding a new dimension to your birding in the field.

Be sure to come early and enjoy some refreshments and conversation in the Observation Room at the Alabama Wildlife Center, then, when it is time for

the program, we will proceed to the auditorium for the presentation.

Also, bring your binoculars and field guides for a bird walk after the program. We will visit a site within the park to look for wintering species like brown creeper, cedar waxwing, winter wren, hermit thrush and both kinglet species.

Next "Audubon Teaches Nature" Topic in the Series:

The Wetumpka Astrobleme, An Ancient Tale - Sunday, January 18th, 2015 - 2 p.m. - David Frings, Guest Speaker (OMIC)

Half Day Field Trip Railroad Park and Avondale Park

Saturday, November 1, 2014 - 8 A.M.

Birmingham Audubon will be hosting a half day field trip on November 1, 2014 showcasing two of Birmingham's urban parks: Railroad Park and Avondale Park. Our journey will begin downtown at Railroad Park and continue on to near-by Avondale Park following a brunch/snack break at Urban Standard.

Birds seen at Railroad Park in the past include song sparrows, savannah sparrows, Cooper's hawk, American kestrels and on occasion, Peregrine falcons. This park is a recent addition that has provided a nice urban habitat for many species.

Avondale Park, our destination after our break at Urban Standard, is one of the city's older urban parks. Among other historical notes, it was the site of Birmingham's first zoo. Currently, Birmingham Audubon is partnering with Avondale Samaritan Place to restore and revive the Avondale Park Rose and Habitat Garden. Along with looking for birds, we will learn all the latest details on this project.

Plan to meet at Railroad Park on 1st Ave South Between 17th and 18th street at 8:00 am.

Please park as close to the pavilion as possible. We will plan to break for brunch/snack at Urban Standard, which is located at 2320 2nd Ave. North. Then, we will move on to Avondale Park, located at 4101 5th Ave South.

This trip will consist of a short drive and mostly walking, so be prepared to be on your feet for a while. We recommend that you bring along drinks, snacks and appropriate clothing for November weather.

TRIP LEADER: Susan Barrow (H) 943-8667 (C) 253-8667 .



Rail Road Park -
By Greg Harber

November Field Trip Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge

Sunday, November 22, 2014 - 7 A.M.

Northern harriers and brown creepers arrived in Birmingham in time to be tallied on the fall bird count, so by the time you read this newsletter plenty of other wintering species will have arrived too. This means it is time for the annual Birmingham Audubon field trip to Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge near Decatur in North Alabama. Plan to join us on Saturday November 22 to view thousands of snow geese, ducks, ducks and more ducks, perhaps a few Sandhill Cranes, various hawk species and whatever decides to surprise us!

TRAVEL PLANS: Our gathering place is the parking lot behind the Wells Fargo Bank at the Fieldstown Road Shopping Center in Gardendale, just off I-65 North at exit #271 (665 Fieldstown Road, Gardendale, AL, 35071). Turn right onto Fieldstown Road, another right onto Odum Road, and an immediate left into the shopping center. We will leave at 7 a.m. and caravan up I-65 toward Decatur to the Priceville exit (# 334), a drive of approximately 60 miles, and reconvene at the Hardee's at 8:30 a.m.

After a rest break, we will announce any further details. Dwight Cooley, refuge manager, will lead us through various sections of the refuge such as White Springs Dike, Arrowhead

Landing at Limestone Bay, Beaverdam Peninsula with its viewing platform, and the Buckeye Unit of the Refuge. One major bonus is that we will be able to travel to areas of the refuge that are behind gates that are normally locked and inaccessible to cars.

This will be an all-day trip, so bring a picnic lunch, drinks and snacks. Remember, weather this time of year can be changeable, so dressing in layers is advised. Have a full tank of gas. Spotting scopes are welcome. If you do not have binoculars, we will have some for use on this trip. For those who wish, supper may be shared at a local restaurant at day's end.

TRIP LEADER:
For questions and trip details, call Greg Harber, 205-251-2133.

Northern harrier -
Thinkstock by Getty Images



November Membership Program

Coastal Alabama:

“It’s for the Birds”

Presented by Dr. John Dindo of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab
Birmingham Botanical Gardens, East Room
Thursday, November 20, 2014 - 7 P.M.

Mobile Bay is the fourth largest drainage basin in North America by volume and, as such, it provides a continuous supply of nutrients that make the bay highly productive. This productivity results in a year round nursery habitat for marine invertebrates and vertebrates, which in turn feeds the wide diversity of avian fauna in and around the bay. Colonies of herons and egrets can be found from the Mobile/Tensaw delta (a combination of wetland grasses and sedges and flooded forest) to the islands within Mississippi Sound. Changes along the coast due to hurricanes have altered nesting habitats and in some cases resulted in change in use by different avian species.



Blue heron - Thinkstock by Getty Images

pelicans, the island is utilized by a plethora of other avian species in the spring and summer. Dauphin Island, one of the premier birding locations in the United States, is located between two major flyways. Dauphin Island provides birders opportunities in spring and fall to observe the migration of song birds as they move north and south.

Dindo is currently the Associate Director of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. He has been associated with the Sea Lab for over 35 years. His research interests include Avian Ecology (dissertation was on the population dynamics of a mixed species heronry on a coastal Alabama island) and Fisheries Biology. He has a Ph.D. in Biology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, a M.S.

Dr. John Dindo of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab will discuss several hot-spots of coastal birding along the Gulf Coast of Alabama. For example, Gaillard Island, a Corps of Engineers spoil island, has become the site for the largest single colony of Brown pelicans in the Gulf of Mexico. In addition to the

in Marine Science from University of Alabama at Birmingham and a B.S. in Biology from the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

Fellowship and snack time begins at 6:30 p.m.
Please come early for refreshments and conversation.

Fall Audubon Camp-out

Foscue Creek Campground

November 14-16, 2014 - Demopolis, Alabama

On the shores of Demopolis Lake may be found the site of Birmingham Audubon’s Fall Campout, Foscue Creek Campground. The campground lies south of the confluence of the Black Warrior and Tombigbee Rivers in the Black Belt, a region of black prairie with savannas and conifer woods. Demopolis Lake, at 10,000 acres, offers the visitor opportunities for boating, fishing and unique landscapes to explore. The waters and woods of Foscue Creek Campground may hold chances for viewing both wintering and resident waterfowl, permanent woodland residents, wintering songbirds and sparrows. The campground is a designated site in the Black Belt Region of the Alabama Birding Trail. It is anticipated that, in conjunction with the campout, an impromptu field trip from Birmingham will be meeting with the campers on Saturday. In addition to the campground, there are two other Birding Trail sites in Demopolis: River Walk and Spillway Falls.

The campground has both a boat ramp and a hiking trail for visitors to use. The hiking trail runs along the shoreline and is equipped with benches for wildlife viewing and trail markers for tree identification.

There are 54 campsites, 44 of which may be used for RVs. Five campsites of the 54 campsites have been reserved in the leader’s (Maureen Shaffer) name. The campsites are spacious, private and located near or close to the water. They feature picnic tables, electric and water hookups, lantern holders and campfire rings with grill.

Foscue Creek Park is fully staffed and beautifully maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is immaculate and safe and has clean restrooms, good roads, ample parking and excellent birding.

DIRECTIONS: From Demopolis, Alabama, drive three miles west on U.S. Highway 80 and turn right at Maria Street. Go approximately two miles and follow signs to the campground entrance.

GPS: 32.512838 -87.87181

ADDRESS: Foscue Creek Park Campground, 1800 Lock and Dam Road Demopolis, AL 36732, Phone - 334-289-5535

WEBSITE:

www.alabamabirdingtrails.com/sites/foscue-creek-park/
<http://www.reserveamerica.com>

TRIP LEADER: For further information, please contact Maureen Shaffer at 205-822-8728 (Home) or 205-222-2662 (Cell)



SoSo for the Record

Sightings September 1 through September 27, 2014

Eastern Towhees have been noted as being particularly vulnerable to brood parasitism by brown-headed cowbirds as noted by one expert who has recorded close to 300 incidents of this interaction between the two species. One reason that this may be so prevalent is the tendency of towhees to nest in low bushes or on the ground. Consequently, I was very pleased to see recently three juveniles with one of the adults in my yard.

Thanks to Greg Harber, the "Swift Nights Out" have been a big success and well attended.

Other Sightings:

- 9/1 **Spotted Sandpiper**; Logan Martin Lake (RC).
- 9/3 **Peregrine Falcon**; Downtown Birmingham (GH,MR,DC).
- 9/8 **Glossy Ibis**; Observation Building, Wheeler Refuge (JA, TR).
- 9/10 **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**; (a little early); Vestavia (HW).
- 9/21 **Horned Grebe**; Anhinga; Limestone Park (SL, EL).
- 9/21 Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve – Three rarities.
Warbling Vireo; (SD,EC).
Golden-winged Warbler; (SD).
Mourning Warbler; (RR,SR,TDeV)
- 9/27 **Bewick's Wren**; Airport (Zion Prairie), day of Birmingham Audubon's Fall Bird Count (SD).

Contributors:

Jane Allen
Ross Cohen
Elizabeth Conn
David Cousins
Todd DeVore
Scot Duncan
Steve and Eleanor Lehman
Ann Miller
Rick and Sue Remy
Tom Ress
Michelle Reynolds
Harriett Wright



Eastern towhee - Thinkstock by Getty Images

Please send sightings for January issue of Flicker Flashes at least five days before the November 1 deadline to Ann Miller, 520 Yorkshire Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209 annmiller520@aol.com

Veterans' Day Beginner Bird Walk

Saturday, November 11, 2014
9:00 - 11:30 A.M.
Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Please join Birmingham Audubon at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens for a Beginner's Bird Walk on November 11, 2014. Participants will be given instructions on how to use binoculars, spotting birds in the field and identifying them. This is a bit different than our normal field trip offerings as we will focus on educating new birders of all ages.

Hawks, woodpeckers and nut-hatches may be among a few of the birds that we hope to see. Early winter migrants like hermit thrush and golden crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets may be spotted as well.

This bird walk is intended for those who consider themselves beginner bird watchers no matter what their ages. While adults are strongly encouraged to bring their children or grandchildren with them to participate in this bird watching experience, children must be accompanied by an adult. Birmingham Audubon will provide binoculars for use during the event. You may also bring your own binoculars if you have them. Certainly bring your enthusiasm and desire to learn!

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED:

Call Helena Uber-Wamble, Teaching Naturalist at 205-714-8228. Please leave your name, number of adults and number of children with the children's ages and the contact phone number and email address. Confirmation and meet-up plans will follow.

All Birmingham Audubon field trips are free and open to the public.



Prairie Seed Collecting and Habitat Restoration Field Trip

Saturday, November 8, 2014 - 7 A.M.

Please join Birmingham Audubon on Saturday, November 8 as we journey to the western Black Belt area of our state. Although we may also do some birding, our primary objective will be to collect seeds from native prairie plants to use in the establishment of a prairie habitat site in Alabaster's Limestone Park. University of West Alabama staff will guide us through that university's restored prairie, help us identify various plant species, and introduce us to their adaptations and utilization by birds and other wildlife.

We plan to depart at 7 a.m. from the Hoover McDonald's on U.S. 31 (across from the Galleria) 1731 Montgomery High-

way. After visiting the prairie site, we will have lunch at Tres Hermanos Mexican restaurant.

Please dress for the weather and come with a pair of scissors, lightweight garden gloves, a full tank of gas, water, snacks and an inquisitive mind. Binoculars and cameras are also welcome on this trip. We will collect prairie seed for the Urban Bird Habitat Restoration initiative Birmingham Audubon is undertaking at Limestone Park in partnership with the City of Alabaster. Bags for the seed will be provided.

TRIP LEADER: Dick Mills (Home) 205-967-2454 (Cell) 205-873-0174 (Office) 205 -972-8733

79th Annual Birmingham Audubon Society

Christmas Bird Count

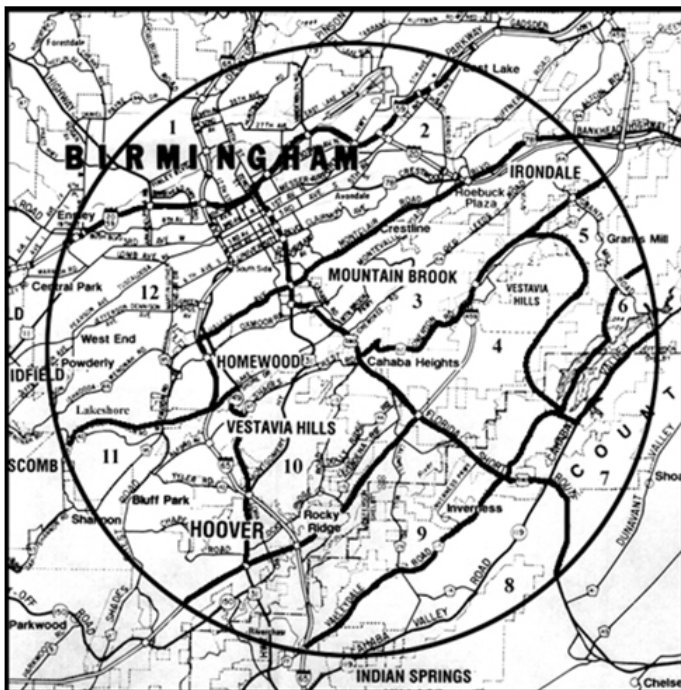
Saturday, December 27, 2014

This year's Birmingham Audubon Christmas Bird Count will be our 79th and all members and friends are invited to participate in this long-running count to be held Saturday, December 27, 2014. The Birmingham Audubon Christmas Bird Count was begun in 1946, making this one of the longest running counts in the country. Thanks to the continued support of our dedicated members and friends this wonderful Christmas tradition continues to this day. Consider making the Christmas Bird Count a part of your holiday tradition and join the fun on count day.

Accompanying this article you will find a copy of the map detailing the count circle and the various territories within the circle. I invite all of our members to consider participating in the count by choosing an area (you do not have to live within the territory or the count circle) and contacting the corresponding party leader to make arrangements to join the group. If you are not able or do not wish to participate, but have some unusual winter birds visiting your feeders that we should record for the count, please call us in advance. We especially would love to hear from you if you have some owls in your neighborhood or wintering hummingbirds!

Get your holidays off to a merry start by joining in this historic count. David George will handle compiling duties and Maureen Shaffer will host our compilation at her home, located at 2216 Mountain Lake Terrace, Hoover AL 35226. Call Maureen if you need directions: 205-822-8728. The compilation will begin at 5 p.m. and light refreshments will be provided.

Greg Harber - for the Birds Count Committee



AREA	LEADER	PHONE
1	John Imhof	995-0688
5/6	Pelham Rowan	970-0844
2	Greg Harber	251-2133
8/9	Ty Keith	602-8037
3	Matt Hunter	592-4125
10	Maureen Shaffer	822-8728
4/7	TBA	TBA
11	TBA	TBA
12	David George	477-5074

Birmingham Audubon

Cordially invites you to attend its
68th Annual Banquet

Sponsored by



Thursday, December 4, 2014
Six-o'clock in the Evening

Reception with Cash Bar - 6:00 P.M.
Dinner - 7:00 P.M.

Protective Life Corporation
Grand Bay Dining Room

Orchard oriole -
46% of Summer range lost
90% Winter range lost



Thinkstock by Getty Images

Brown headed nuthatch -
100% of Summer range lost
28% Winter range lost



Thinkstock by Getty Images

Birds and Climate Change: Conservation Status of North American Birds

Presented by: Dr. Gary Langham,
Vice President & Chief Scientist, National Audubon Society

Reservations required - We welcome non-members to attend!
TO REGISTER AND PAY ONLINE: visit www.birminghamaudubon.org
You may also register by completing and returning the form below.

Dinner is \$42.00 per person. Reservations can only be guaranteed through November 24.
Please indicate your choice of menu below:

Entree A - Filet Mignon topped with Tcholupitoulas sauce, served on garlic mashed potatoes
Entree B - Pasta Primavera (vegetarian)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Please make reservations for the following person(s): Name, Phone, Email (for directions)*	Entree Choice	
	A (Meat)	B (Vegetarian)

*Please, include your mailing address if you do not have an email address

Make check payable for: Birmingham Audubon Society

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____

Send check and form to:
Cissy Bennett
1512 Edinburgh Way - Birmingham, AL 35243
Phone: 205-969-0249



Dr. Gary Langham

Join and Support Birmingham Audubon

Are birds, wildlife and our natural habitat of interest to you?

If so, we invite you to be a part of a community that enjoys, values and protects birds and our natural world.

Founded in 1946, the Birmingham Audubon Society is Alabama's leading non-profit organization engaging people in the enjoyment and conservation of birds, their habitats and the natural world. With your support, we involve people through recreational birding, by extending their horizons with education programs, and by engaging them in conservation actions such as planting trees, counting birds, and working with local, state, and national policy makers.

There are many ways you can support Birmingham Audubon

Please join us and make a difference for birds and your quality of life, right here in Alabama!

Membership

Take the first step and become a Member of Birmingham Audubon. Get connected with our *Flicker Flashes* newsletter. See birds by participating in one of our free field trips, and learn something at one of our free monthly programs.

Make a Donation

We rely on your support and are proud to work on your behalf to restore wildlife habitat, conserve areas that are important to birds, and inspire appreciation and understanding of our natural world. Your generous donation, above and beyond the basic membership dues, is an important source of funding which allows Birmingham Audubon to facilitate our vital mission of connecting people with birds and the places they live.

Your memberships and donations support:

- Free monthly programs on natural science topics
- Free field trips led by expert birders to great birding / cultural locations
- Opportunity to attend Annual Banquet and Birmingham Audubon Mountain Workshop
- Introduction to great locations to see and observe birds
- Exposure to knowledgeable birders
- Travel opportunities to regional, national and international birding locations
- Graduate student research grants
- Local and statewide conservation initiatives
- Adult and student education initiatives
- Local, state and national conservation initiatives
- Alabama Birding Trails support

Birmingham Audubon Society Membership Application

Join Renew Annual Membership: \$ 20.00

Donation to support the programs & projects of Birmingham Audubon: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Please make check payable to:
Birmingham Audubon Society

Please charge my credit card
 Visa MasterCard

Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Birmingham Audubon Society is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Your donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Please keep my donation anonymous
 Yes No

I want to receive communications electronically
 Yes No

I want to be contacted to learn about volunteer activities
 Yes No

Mail this form to: Birmingham Audubon Society, 200 19th Street North, Birmingham, AL 35203-3117

If you are interested in joining National Audubon Society, visit: www.audubon.org

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Birmingham Audubon Society
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

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Birmingham, AL 35203-3117

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Web Site: www.birminghamaudubon.org

Please check your mailing label for your membership expiration date.

Executive Director: 205-714-8227
Teaching Naturalist: 205-714-8228

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Consider gifting a membership to Birmingham Audubon this Holiday Season

www.birminghamaudubon.org
or 205-714-8227

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Copies of *Flicker Flashes* can be viewed and downloaded from the Birmingham Audubon web site: www.birminghamaudubon.org