

## NC Birding Trail Guide for Coastal Plain Now Available

On June 19, 2007, the NC Birding Trail celebrated the grand opening of the Coastal Plain region of the Trail, with ceremonies at Hammocks Beach State Park. The event marked the unveiling of the NC Birding Trail Guide for the Coastal Plain region — a 172-page, spiral bound guide with detailed information about the 102 sites along the first section of what will soon be a statewide trail.

Wake Audubon members who have seen early copies of the guide agree that the layout is attractive and easy to read, while the information included is just what a traveling birder needs. Though you may think you are familiar with Eastern North Carolina's birding sites already, you are almost guaranteed to be pleasantly surprised by some of the recommendations in the new Guide.

The Guide is available to purchase for \$10 during Wake Audubon's regular monthly meetings. Or visit the NC Birding Trail Web site, [www.ncbirdingtrail.org](http://www.ncbirdingtrail.org).

The NC Birding Trail is a driving trail linking great birding sites into a cohesive and marketable unit. Information about stops on the trail and news about the upcoming Piedmont and Mountain region sections is also available on the Web site or you can email the trail coordinator, Salinda Daley, at [info@ncbirdingtrail.org](mailto:info@ncbirdingtrail.org).



### Wake Audubon Officers 2007

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Vice-president: Jeff Beane  
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**Mission Statement:** "To foster knowledge, appreciation, and enjoyment of nature; to encourage responsible environmental stewardship; to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity."

### Wake Audubon Membership

(includes membership to National Audubon)

Send this coupon and a check for \$20 annual dues to: **Wake Audubon Membership, P.O. Box 12452, Raleigh, NC 27605.**

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August 2007

Wingbeats

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## Local Waterway, Neuse River Named One of Top 10 Most Endangered

Perhaps you've seen the stenciled notices around town — adjacent to street drains, they simply say "Neuse River Basin." What do these signs mean? Why should we care what goes into the Neuse?

The Neuse River has earned the unfortunate distinction of being listed as one of the Top 10 Most Endangered Rivers in the Nation, mainly because of hog farms and rapid, poorly planned development in its basin.

**The Neuse River basin supports one of the fastest growing human populations in the country.**

A major part of the second largest estuarine system in the United States, the Neuse basin supports one of the fastest growing human populations in the country. Upwards of 2 million people live, work and play in its watershed. The river has its source near Durham and its mouth in the Pamlico Sound. It flows for 250 miles through the heartland of North Carolina, providing drinking water for communities along its length. It has also become a dumping ground for human and animal waste.

The most infamous waste contaminant of the Neuse results from the numerous hog production farms in the basin. Waste from these facilities contains nitrogen, ammonia, and phosphorus, which contribute to algal blooms. These in turn cause oxygen depletion in the water, resulting in destruction of river life at all levels, from the tiniest microorganisms to the biggest freshwater fish. This ongoing threat, however, may be eclipsed in the coming decades. The human population

of the Neuse River basin is predicted to increase by one million inhabitants in the next 20 years, with the potential for many more sources of pollution and habitat loss.

Can the river survive this dramatic challenge? The answer depends on how well we manage growth and work to protect this treasure. The Neuse Riverkeepers, Dean Naujoks and Larry Baldwin, are working hard to ensure that this precious and essential

waterway is protected. Their activities range from working with legislators and state agencies to control sewage discharge in the river and limit hog farm development to organizing and supervising the annual Neuse River Spring Cleanup. In April 2006, this event involved 300 volunteers who cleaned up 62 miles of the river by collecting of 21,000 pounds of trash.

We should care about what goes into the Neuse because the quality of life for people and animals in North Carolina depends in part on the cleanliness of our natural resources. The Neuse is traditionally the lifeblood of piedmont and eastern North Carolina. Our actions today will determine its quality tomorrow.

The Neuse Riverkeepers Web site, [www.neuseriverkeepers.org](http://www.neuseriverkeepers.org), is a wealth of information about the Neuse and what you can do to help restore and preserve its purity. Visit and find out how you can help protect the Neuse.



Wake Audubon  
P.O. Box 12452  
Raleigh, NC 27605

[www.wakeaudubon.org](http://www.wakeaudubon.org)

Wild Birds Unlimited



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## Wake Audubon Calendar

Join us for these fun and informative upcoming events.

### Monthly Meeting

#### Members' Slide Show

August 14 at 7:30 p.m.

This month's speaker is you! Bring up to five of your favorite natural history images (slides or PowerPoint) to the meeting. We'll put them together for a great members' potpourri, and each member will be asked to briefly describe his/her images to the group.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the A-level conference room of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, and is open to the public.

### Bird Walk/Event

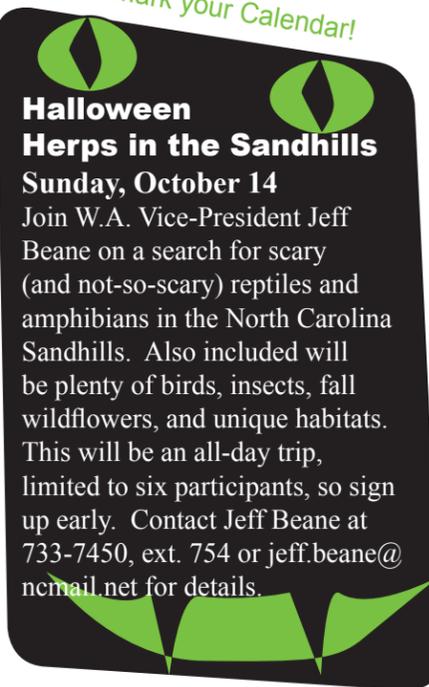
#### DeHart Botanical Gardens

August 11 at 8:00 a.m.

This month our birdwalk will lead us to DeHart Botanical Gardens in Louisburg. A site on the N.C. Birding Trail, the DeHart Gardens offer a lake, early successional habitats and woodlands. We will explore this 88 acre garden and its trails in hopes of finding many of the resident birds.

Plan to meet at the Museum parking lot at 8 a.m. to carpool and return by 1 p.m. Bring snacks and water and wear appropriate clothing for what will likely be a hot summer morning.

Mark your Calendar!



**Halloween Herps in the Sandhills**  
**Sunday, October 14**  
Join W.A. Vice-President Jeff Beane on a search for scary (and not-so-scary) reptiles and amphibians in the North Carolina Sandhills. Also included will be plenty of birds, insects, fall wildflowers, and unique habitats. This will be an all-day trip, limited to six participants, so sign up early. Contact Jeff Beane at 733-7450, ext. 754 or jeff.beane@ncmail.net for details.

### Feathered Facts

**Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*)** — This species is both cosmopolitan and circumpolar. It breeds in arctic tundra, and migrates through and to different global destinations — some 15,000 kilometers away. Like most shorebirds that breed in the Arctic, Knots arrive in late May/early June, pair up very quickly (sometimes within hours), and depart by late July/early August. The Red Knot has become a flagship species for coastal health over the past decade, but sadly Knot populations have deteriorated along with the health of our coastlines. On the eastern U.S. coast, the Knot depends upon horseshoe crab eggs to sustain its spring migration, and eats them so as to



“bulk up” for breeding, especially at Delaware Bay. Recent laws to curb the over-harvesting of crab eggs should aid this and other shorebirds greatly. Red Knots migrate through North Carolina biannually — the best times to see them are August/September and May.

~John Gerwin

## President's Message Where do we go from here?

Many Wake Audubon members have worked hard to protect Raleigh's environmentally sensitive and special parks. You have seen articles on Horseshoe Farm Park and Durant Nature Park in recent newsletter. Please look again at John Connors' article in our June newsletter. To update you, the Raleigh City Council decided not put a gymnasium and large community center at Horseshoe Park at this time, and opted instead to make some minimal improvements, protecting the character of the park. We can be grateful for this temporary protection for this beautiful property.

It is, unfortunately, only temporary, because in the absence the adoption of an environmental stewardship plan for the park, there are no guarantees that more building won't occur later. In the end, the park planning process, with input from community representatives, appears to have been a wasted effort. That may sound harsh, but for people who spent over a year attending planning meeting after planning meeting, it is not trivial. I question whether citizens will be eager to volunteer again for an effort that was ignored. We also face the prospect of seeing a new park development with gymnasiums, parking lots and possibly ball fields built directly behind Campbell Lodge in Durant Park. Although this development is described as a new park, it is, in fact, next door to Durant. Many of us who have seen the site are concerned that the environmental quality

of neighboring Durant Park will be seriously degraded.

Unfortunately, the City Council has made its decision, and they are the ones who are ultimately responsible for the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department's policies and for the matter in which park lands will be developed. We have presented what we believe are more cost-effective parks development scenarios, but these were not adopted. In particular, we lament the decision to not partner with Wake County on the development of a major recreational complex just down the road from Durant Park on Camp Durant Road.

Now we find ourselves at a turning point. Do you want to protect the few nature-oriented parks in Raleigh? It is important that all of us to educate ourselves on the views and actions of our elected representatives, and exercise our right to vote in the upcoming fall elections for Raleigh City Council. The Sierra Club and League of Women Voters, among others, provide information on the past records and philosophies of the candidates. It is important to look beyond what incumbents are promising and look at their actions and votes on matters that are important to us. I realize that not all of us live in Raleigh (I don't), but many of us enjoy the parks and want natural areas to remain for future generations to enjoy.



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## Quick Trip to Lumber River IBA Rewards Canoeists with Nice Sightings, Songs

Jim and I took a last minute trip to the Lumber River State Park on Saturday, June 23. We put the canoe in at the Princess Ann landing and paddled upstream until it seemed like a good time to turn around. The river was running very low, but was still passable by canoe. There were many sandbars, all good places to pull over, listen, and observe.

We heard or saw 23 different bird species as well as some awesome dragonflies. Northern Parula and Prothonotary Warblers were abundant, as were White-eyed Vireos, Acadian Flycatchers, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Carolina Wren. We heard Pileated Woodpeckers, a Red-shouldered Hawk, and Cuckoos. Turkey Vultures were hanging out in the trees beside the river, getting a good view up and down the banks.



A park ranger told us he was seeing Anhingas regularly, but we missed them on this trip. Other birds we did see: Cardinal, Red-eyed Vireo, Tufted Titmouse, Northern Flicker, Carolina Chickadee, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Downy Woodpecker, Crow, Great Blue heron, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Dove and Mockingbird.

While we weren't able to bird the official designated spots on the river that are part of the IBA Adoption, even casual birding with reports of what we see and hear are important to our adoption work. Jim

and I will submit our list to Wake Audubon's IBA Adoption team. It was a fun way to help out!

~ Gerry Luginbuhl

### Act Locally

#### Get the Most out of Paper Before Recycling

What do you do with paper that you don't need anymore because it has writing or printing on one side? Use the other side before throwing it away, of course!

Take notes. Make a grocery list. Write out your "things to do" list. Use it as scratch paper in your computer printer to print draft copies of documents. Take notes in class. Cut it up and make paper snowflakes

with your kids. Cut it up and make a stack of notepaper by the phone for writing down phone messages. Keep a stack by your computer for making quick notes. Make a paper airplane. Use it for compost.

And when you've used that paper as much as you can, please put it in the recycling bin so it can be used again. Don't forget to recycle your newspapers and cardboards as well. Thanks for reusing and recycling!

