

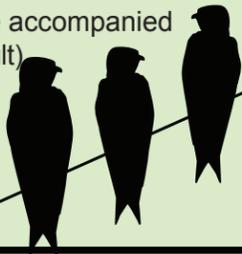
Upcoming Field Trip

Marvelous Martins and More!

Come celebrate Wake Audubon's Year of the Purple Martin with the Museum of Natural Sciences. Experience the spectacular sunrise departure and sunset return of up to 100,000 purple martins from their roost under the old Mann's Harbor Bridge leading to Roanoke Island. Then spend the daytime hours birding along the coastal habitats of the Outer Banks and in the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge.

Contact Debbie Huston at the Museum at 733-7450 ext. 555 for more information. **The trip is filling up fast, so reserve now if you want to go.**

- When:** Friday, July 20 (1 p.m.) to Sunday, July 22 (6 p.m.)
- Fee:** \$30 for Audubon members (\$40 for non-members) *Fee covers travel and instruction. Lodging information will be available at registration.*
- Leaders:** John Gerwin, Doug Pratt, and Becky Browning, Museum ornithologists; Jerry Reynolds, Museum educator
- Where:** Meet at Museum of Natural Science, travel by Museum bus to field sites
- Minimum age:** 14 (minors must be accompanied by a registered adult)
- Activity Level:** easy to moderate



Wake Audubon Officers 2007

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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."

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June 2007



Struggle for Nature-Based Parks in Raleigh Continues

by John Connors, Wake Audubon Board member

The stakes have just been raised in what has proven to be a two-year-long struggle between local conservation organizations such as Wake Audubon and officials in charge of planning Raleigh's parks. A recent line item in this year's bond proposal, we fear, will jeopardize two of the city's most beautiful and natural parks, Horseshoe Farm and Durant Nature Park. The line item calls for constructing a \$9 million community center/gymnasium and \$2 million of athletic fields at an "undisclosed park in northeast Raleigh" — and those of us who have watched our natural areas come under fire by the Raleigh Parks staff, the Raleigh Parks Board, and City Council members Jessie Taliaferro and Tommy Craven feel certain that Horseshoe Farm and Durant

now sit in the cross hairs of development once again. Wake Audubon and our fellow conservation organizations appear to disagree with some Raleigh officials on the philosophy of public recreation. Wake Audubon has worked hard to establish a natural-resource-oriented facility at Horseshoe Farm Park, instead of ball parks and basketball courts which will destroy the natural setting and habitats so favorable for some of Raleigh's remaining wildlife. Likewise, we are now trying to protect the program and natural resource values at Durant Nature Park. Raleigh has only five parks dedicated to nature recreation but has more than 100 that cater to athletics. Is it unreasonable

continued inside...

Great Day to be Out on the NC Birding Trail

Eleven people showed up at the Museum of Natural Sciences parking lot on March 24 to explore the NC Birding Trail. After driving for an hour and a half, we arrived at our first destination, the Roanoke Canal Trail and Museum. While walking on this trail, we had great views of Field and Chipping Sparrows. We also heard a Red-shouldered Hawk and three Pileated Woodpeckers. After spending over an hour on this trail we headed over to the Northampton County Birding Trail.

On the way to the Northampton trail, some saw a Wild Turkey that flew right in front of their car. Others had

a chance to see Meadowlarks in the expansive fields. Here we had an excellent view of a Song Sparrow that we saw from a boardwalk on a small pond. There was also a flyover swallow and a Cuckoo on a wire.

Our last stop was the Tar River Trail. It offered great views of the Tar River and provided a chance for everyone to have great looks at a Red-headed Woodpecker.

Everybody had a wonderful time and left in high spirits. It was a great day to be outside and 54 species were recorded.

~ Kyle Kittelberger



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Wake Audubon Calendar

Join us for these fun and informative upcoming events.

Monthly Meeting

Wake Up, Wake County!

June 12 at 7:30 p.m.

Karen Rindge, chair of WakeUp Wake County and volunteer for NC Green Power, will present an overview of these organizations and discuss ways that Wake County residents can live more sustainably. The presentation will include the short film "Kilowatt Ours."

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

Birding Horseshoe Farm

June 9 at 8:30 a.m.

Join Wake Audubon Board member John Little on a walk around Raleigh's Horseshoe Farm. Contact John for more details at 781-0829.

Field Trip

Middle Creek Bottomlands

June 16 at 7:30 a.m. (carpool)

Middle Creek Bottomlands in Johnston County is one of the most

accessible spots from the Triangle to see bottomland and coastal plain birds. Prothonotary Warblers and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are usually easy to find from the road that bisects the tract. We'll look for Swainson's Warblers, of which three held territories on the tract last year. Anhingas were present last year, too. Wood Ducks, herons, two or three species of vireos, Red-shouldered Hawks, cuckoos, additional warblers, Blue Grosbeaks, up to five species of flycatchers, and several species of woodpeckers are normally present.

There will be two ditches to cross and a mile or two of walking, so bring proper footwear. The terrain is otherwise quite flat. Meet at the Jones Street parking lot east of the museum complex at 7:30 a.m. to carpool. The trip will be led by Board member Erik Thomas; you can contact him for more information at 880-7809.

A Ribbon Cutting for the NC Birding Trail, June 19

Hammock Beach State Park. Contact Lena for information at 571-0388.

Feathered Facts



American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

— Personally, I've never seen an oyster run, so the need to "catch" one escapes me. But this bird does feed on them, other bivalves, mollusks, and marine worms. I like to think the red bill results from seafood sauce. Like other threatened shorebirds, this species prefers open,

undisturbed sandy beaches, estuaries, and dredge spoil islands. Populations are declining in mid-Atlantic states. Between 1979 and 2004, Virginia's dropped by approximately 50 percent. Off road vehicles, human disturbance, and a high raccoon density contribute to low reproductive success. N.C. birds are resident all year round. Around 350 pairs occur along our coast. Audubon NC's Coastal Sanctuary islands support numerous pairs. Lea and Hutaff Islands provide good conditions for very high hatching and fledging success. Scientists in 2007 proposed that the American Oystercatcher be added to the N.C. Species of Special Concern list. ~John Gerwin

President's Message

Protecting Birds' Winter Home in Alaska

Those of us who were lucky enough to attend the April Wake Audubon meeting were treated to a wonderful talk by Taldi Walter, a passionate young Audubon environmental advocate. The pictures she showed us were beautiful. We all learned how to pronounce Teshekpuk, as in Teshekpuk Lake, a place I admit I had never heard of. Teshekpuk is in the National Petroleum Reserve on the North Slope of Alaska. Although the lake and surrounding wetlands are in the National Petroleum reserve, they have been protected for the last 30 years because of their unique role in supporting wildlife, including the caribou herd that supports the needs of the native North Slope people. The lake is surrounded by wetlands used by tens of thousands of nesting and molting waterfowl, including some of the swans and snow geese that winter in the Pocosin Lakes Wildlife Refuge. It was amazing to learn of the connection between our own local refuge and the remote wetlands near the Arctic Sea.

One of the important features of Teshekpuk Lake is the thousands of birds that take refuge there while they molt. During their molt, these birds are unable to fly, and are therefore especially vulnerable to predators. The deep lake

provides them with a safe place to forage for food while they grow new feathers. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recently attempted to lease oil and gas rights within the Teshekpuk Lake area. Audubon sued the BLM, forcing them to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement. Meanwhile, Audubon and other environmental groups are working to convince Congress to permanently protect this small part of the vast National Petroleum reserve.

Please take a moment to go to the National Audubon's Web site to learn more about Teshekpuk Lake and what we can do to protect this important habitat. The birds we are trying to protect here in the winter need habitats such as Teshekpuk Lake to survive in the summer and prepare for their flight back down south.

...continued from page 1.

to ask that nature be protected and catered to in at least those five?

The community center and athletic fields proposed by planners require the passage of a parks bond package that the City of Raleigh will propose for this autumn's election. At a recent City Council meeting I spoke on behalf of Wake Audubon saying that our organization might oppose the parks bond if certain items were not made clear. While we support the idea of this community center, as we are pretty sure the plan is to put it at Horseshoe Farm or Durant Nature Park, we simply cannot approve of that. Since I made those comments, Mayor Meeker has promised that the issue of where those facilities will be located should be decided before the Parks Bond is put forward. This decision is likely to come at the May 15 City Council meeting. It is our hope that these two parks will be taken off the table for these facilities, and that athletics will more appropriately be located at the Sydnor

White Park site near Perry Creek Road, or at the Wake County landfill site on Durant Road.

The Sierra Club and Friends of Horseshoe Farm have partnered with Wake Audubon and others in this effort. Conservation organizations have always been among the most ardent supporters of funding parks, so we find ourselves in an unusual position of opposing this development. In this case, however, we need to stand together on this or we will lose those few parks that are devoted to nature recreation. By the time you read this newsletter, we will probably know whether our chapter will advocate for, or organize opposition against, the Raleigh Parks Bond. I never thought I'd have to consider that.

So please stay tuned.

John Connors spent 17 years employed by the Raleigh Parks and Rec Department and has intimate knowledge of the parks planning process. He is a long-time Wake Audubon Board member and a former chapter president.

Act Locally

Energy Conservation Tips for Drying Laundry

Ahhh... Summer... the time for lemonade, trips to the beach, and the fresh smell of clothing dried outside in a warm summer breeze. The scent alone is reason enough to hang your laundry out to dry, but if you need more, the most energy-conscious method of drying clothes is to hang them outside in warm weather. And if you don't like the stiff feeling of line-dried clothing you can soften them by tumbling in the dryer on low heat for a few minutes after bringing them in from the line.

If you regularly use a clothes dryer instead of a clothesline, here are some energy-conservation tips for you.

- Clean out the lint before or after each use.
- Make sure clothes are wrung out as much as they can be (by hand or in your washer) before loading in the dryer.
- Dry light, medium, and heavy items separately (it requires less energy to dry a load of sheets than sheets and towels together).
- Don't overload the dryer.
- Use automatic moisture sensor if you have one so you won't waste energy running the dryer if your items are already dry.

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