

...continued from front page.

abandoned when their drinking water was lost. Many communities in the southwest are facing tough choices, for their water supply is being tapped faster than it can be recharged.

Our own drought in Wake County these past two years made us realize how precious our water supply is. Yes, eventually, the rains returned, but what will happen the next time? What can we do to ensure we will have an adequate supply of drinking water?

I recommend two books: *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and the Coming Battle for the Right to Water* (Maude Barlow, McClelland & Stewart Publishers, 2007), and *When the Rivers Run Dry: Water—The Defining Crisis of the Twenty-First Century* (Fred Pearce, Beacon Press, 2006).

To read more about water rights and water conservation, visit these web sites:

- www.audubon.org (and do a search for water and related topics)
- www.newwaterrights.org
- www.hermes-press.com/water.htm
- www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/11/15/5255/
- www.worldwaterwars.com

The plants and animals that depend on water are often forgotten as we battle over water for agriculture, power-plant cooling, manufacturing, and residential use. You can help: Keep up on the latest legislation when it comes to water competition and water conservation. And yes, please conserve water!

~ Lynn Erla Beegle

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October 2008

Wingbeats

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Inside:

October is packed with great events! Check them all out inside.

Competition for Water: Water Wars

Global water shortages are leading many to call water the "new oil." Demand for water, like demand for oil, is rapidly increasing. "Supplies of water are coming under enormous strain because of the growing global population and an emerging middle-class in Asia that hankers for the water-intensive life enjoyed by people in the West" (The Economist, 08/21/2008).

There is a big difference between the two commodities: oil is non-renewable, and water can be recycled. Although renewable, water can be contaminated beyond feasible redemption. Climate changes are altering freshwater availability in many areas, leading to more frequent and severe droughts. There are few disputes as to who owns an oil field, but water has a habit of ignoring boundaries and flowing downhill, leading to disputes over ownership. The competition for water is leading to "water wars" between cities, states, and even countries!

Many countries are increasing their standard of living as they join the global economy. These countries are repeating what the U.S. did in the fifties and sixties; namely, unhindered growth and industrialization, leading to contaminated lakes, rivers, and ground water (aquifers). Yes, Americans still pollute, but we have many laws to control the amount of water pollution and water depletion. America

is also increasing its water usage, and not just for population increases or lifestyle changes. We also need plenty of water for manufacturing, energy production, and construction.

Water conservation in the home is a noble cause, but it is merely "a drop in the bucket." Water is an essential ingredient to produce everything that sits on a store shelf. It takes 450 cubic feet of water



Many communities in the southwest are facing tough choices, for their water supply is being tapped faster than it can be recharged.

to produce one 200-mm semiconductor computer chip. Energy production is another major consumer of water. Nearly 40 percent of the water drawn from lakes and aquifers in the United States is for cooling power plants. The water is returned to the lake warmer than before, but with a significant amount lost to evaporation. It takes five gallons of water to yield a single gallon of oil from tar sands. Generous subsidies for biofuel have increased the harvest of water-intensive crops that are now used for energy instead of food.

Water shortages can have serious effects. Southern Company, an electricity utility in Atlanta, shut down some of its power plants briefly last summer because of the widespread drought; the water was needed to keep Atlanta's taps operating. Drought has plagued Australia for years, forcing companies to adhere to stringent water restrictions. Throughout history, villages and large settlements have been

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Wake Audubon Calendar

Join us for these fun and informative upcoming events.

Monthly Meeting

Red Wolf Recovery

Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 7:30 p.m.

Kim Wheeler, Executive Director of the Red Wolf Coalition, will discuss the red wolf recovery program, from its beginning to the present. Included will be some myth-breaking facts about these endangered mammals.

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.

Leader's Choice Walk

Chimney Swifts!

Saturday, Oct. 4 at 9 a.m.

Participants will learn about the amazing Chimney Swift and its adaptations to a life of flight. Participants will also learn about the swifts' dependence on humans for nest and roost sites. We will take a walk around the park to

see swifts, as well as the other avian residents of Anderson Point Park. Contact Kari Wouk for more details at krwouk@yahoo.com or 919-395-5630.

Anderson Point Park Walk

Birding Anderson Point

Saturday, Oct. 11 at 8:30 a.m.

Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot for a fun-filled morning of bird watching in our adopted city park. Contact Kari Wouk for more details at 919-395-5630 or krwouk@yahoo.com.

See information about the Red Wolf Howl trip and a Wake Audubon trip to the Lumber River IBA, to the right above "Act Locally."

Feathered Facts

Red-Headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) —



Known to some as the "flying checkerboard," this is one of only four woodpeckers that commonly stores food. It will cache nuts, fruits, and insects (especially live grasshoppers). It is considered the most expert and persistent flycatcher and the most omnivorous woodpecker.

Beginning now, Red-Headed Woodpeckers eat mostly hard mast: acorns, pecans, and beechnuts. They appear to prefer pecans that are infested with weevils. They will switch to corn and other crops when acorns fail. The Red-Headed Woodpecker is migratory from its northern and western range, and nomadic everywhere else, making it a difficult species to track. It is believed to migrate by day in fall, by night in spring. It is known to take a variety of bird eggs during the nesting season. The Red-Headed Woodpecker was a war symbol of Cherokee Indians, and Plains tribes used its head as a battle ornament.

~John Gerwin

President's Message

Birding Trails in N.C. and Nearby States

Birding trails are becoming more and more popular as a way to educate people about birding opportunities in their local areas and as they travel. When we visit new parts of our state, or visit neighboring states, it is great to be able to find easily accessible birding locales and to know the kind of species to look for. In addition to the birding benefits, these guides help the local tourist industry as people stop for meals, lodging, and possibly shopping.

Please look at the fall issue of National Audubon magazine. There will be a four-page pull-out guide to birding trails in the South. Our own birding guides, North Carolina Birding Trails, will be included. There are also birding trail guides for the lower Mississippi River basin, Georgia, Florida, Oklahoma, Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Texas. This pull-out should be a good resource as we travel around our part of the country.

The NC Birding Trail is a great accomplishment, two-thirds completed as this point. Many dedicated individuals have worked to assemble the wealth of information in the birding trail guides. The Eastern and Piedmont Guides are available for purchase from Wake Audubon for \$15/book (available at our monthly meetings) or at many local bookstores for slightly more. You can also view them at the birding trail Web site, www.ncbirdingtrail.org. The guide to the mountain region will be out soon.

Take a day off and explore a new area of the state with the help of one of the guides. And if you stop for a bite to eat, be sure to mention that you are in the area to enjoy the birds! There are many voices speaking out on what they want to see in the way of recreational options in our state. We need to voice our choice for wildlife viewing and, by extension, for conservation of wildlife habitat.

A great birding area in the fall and winter is North Carolina's own Outer Banks. Thanks to Audubon North Carolina and others, the beaches along the National Seashore are now being better managed for wildlife, such as protection for nesting plovers and turtles. But as you probably know, some loud (if minority) voices have been raised against the protection of these nesting areas and in favor of beach driving. It is a cultural practice that will take time to change, but persistent insistence on protecting the wildlife will win in the end. It is the mandate of the National Seashore. If you visit the coast, please tell your hosts that you are there to enjoy the beautiful views, including the unique, beautiful, and precious wildlife. We know that there are very likely similar conflicting values affecting birding habitat in other states, so wherever you go, mention the birds!

Happy birding,

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Field Trip

Red Wolf Howl

Weekend of Oct. 25

(register online at www.redwolves.com) Join us to hear the Red Wolves of the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge! We will leave Raleigh Saturday morning—car-pooling encouraged. We should arrive at the refuge at around noon. We will explore the refuge in the afternoon, and then check into a motel in Manteo. We have a block of rooms reserved at \$60/night for two people and \$6 for each additional person.

After an early supper or snack in Manteo, we will head back out to the refuge for the Wolf Howl, which begins at 6 p.m. and lasts about two hours. For more information on the Wolf Howl, please check www.redwolves.com/howling_regis/index.html.

Wake Audubon has reserved 10 places for the Howl on the 25th. Please contact Gerry Luginbuhl at 919-816-9967 evenings or by email at gerryuginbuhl@nc.rr.com to reserve your place on this trip. First come, first served, although if there is a lot of

demand, we will try to secure additional slots. We could do some additional birding Sunday morning before heading back home. It will be a lot of fun. Please join us!

Lumber River IBA

Weekend of Nov. 8

The final point count for the year at the Lumber River Important Bird Area will take place Nov. 8-9. We have had excellent turnouts by Wake Audubon members and have had successful outings on the previous counts in January, April, and June. If you plan to spend a night or two in the LRIBA, here are some options. There is primitive camping, i.e., tents, at the Lumber River State Park Headquarters. Several of our people have camped there and found it fine. The rest of us have stayed overnight at the Days Inn in Lumberton immediately off I-95 Exit 20 at 3030 Roberts Ave. Still others have participated for one day—either Saturday or Sunday. Please let John Little know if you would to take part in this final effort for the year. Reach him at 919-781-0829 or jlittle17@nc.rr.com.

Act Locally

The Ultimate in Recycling: Recycle Yourself!

You've heard the phrase "reduce, reuse, recycle," right? How about recycling yourself?

Maybe this isn't something you want to think about right now, but it's pretty interesting stuff. A typical traditional burial uses embalming liquids to preserve a body buried in a casket. Cremation contributes to air pollution and can release more than 50 kg of carbon dioxide per body. In some locations (sorry, none yet in North Carolina) you can consider a green burial plot in a biodegradable pine casket or simple shroud with no

embalming. These burials generally have smaller grave markers or simple plaques and a more natural landscape where bodies are allowed to decay and return to the earth. Alternatively, you can consider donating your entire body for organ donations to help save other people's lives, or donate your body to scientific research or educational purposes.

Be sure to tell your next-of-kin or person who would be responsible for decisions regarding your death about your specific wishes.

Something to think about!