

## Slate of Officers for 2008 Announced

The Wake Audubon Board puts forth for approval the following slate of officers for 2008. Any further nominations should be submitted immediately as members will be asked to vote at the December meeting.

Richard Brown  
Ed Corey  
Angie DeLozier  
Becky Desjardins  
John Connors  
John Gerwin  
Rachel Hardin  
Beth Hawkins  
David Heeter  
Sean Higgins  
John Little  
Ted Simons  
David Small  
Erik Thomas  
Paulette Van de Zande  
Kari Wouk  
Nikki Zidar

The chapter officers serve two-year terms and will be up for election again at the end of next year.

Gerry Luginbuhl (president)  
Jeff Beane (vice president)  
Dennis Ose (treasurer)  
Linda Rudd (secretary)

## Wake Audubon Officers 2007

President: Gerry Luginbuhl  
Vice-president: Jeff Beane  
Treasurer: Dennis Ose  
Secretary: Linda Rudd

**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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December 2007

Wingbeats

Printed on 70% recycled paper using soy inks. Please recycle.

## Inside:

Join us for the 108th Annual Christmas Bird Count! Everyone of all birding levels is welcome. See inside for details.

## Halloween Herps Fill the Sandhills During October Field Trip

The Halloween Herps in the Sandhills field trip, led by Jeff Beane on Sunday, Oct. 14, was a great success. A couple of registrants dropped out at the last minute, but the five participants (Jeff Beane, Michael Reedy, Will Rowland, Justin Such, and Nikki Zidar) had a wonderful and educational experience.

Seventeen species of herps (eight of amphibians, nine of reptiles) were observed, including one of the primary target species of the trip — the Southern Hognose snake (*Heterodon simus*), photo below. State-listed as a species of special concern and a candidate for federal listing, this snake is secretive, seasonally active, declining throughout its range, and very difficult to find alive in North Carolina; but participants were fortunate enough to encounter a live hatchling female, as well as four road-killed specimens. The two adult females that Jeff is radio tracking were also spotted. Other interesting herps encountered included a Lesser Siren, Dwarf Mudpuppies, larvae of the still

undescribed "red Sandhills Eurycea," and an Eastern Ribbon snake.

Among the more interesting birds and mammals seen or heard were Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, an American Woodcock, a Great Horned Owl, and a Fox Squirrel. At least six mammal, 37 bird, and eight fish species were observed, for a total of at least 68 vertebrate species. A few Pine Barrens



gentians were in bloom, along with other fall wildflowers. Many interesting butterflies, spiders, and other arthropods were seen, as well as a variety of interesting Sandhills habitats.

Dinner at Los 2 Potrillos Mexican restaurant in Aberdeen rounded out the day. Everyone had a good time and learned something.



## Wake Audubon Calendar

Join us for these fun and informative upcoming events.

### Leader's Choice Bird Walk

#### Crabtree Creek

Saturday, Dec. 8

Join Wake Audubon board member Kari Wouk for a birdwalk along our creek clean-up area on Raleigh/Crabtree Blvd. Contact Kari at krwouk@yahoo.com for details.

### Monthly Meeting

#### Traveling Across the World in an Hour

Tuesday, Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Wake Audubon's youngest-ever speaker, Kyle Kittleberger — naturalist, junior ornithologist, and eighth grader at Ravenscroft School — will discuss his wildlife encounters around the world, including Chile, Alaska, and Costa Rica.

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.

### Feathered Facts



#### Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)

Most of us know the familiar "Snowbird" from feeder activity in the fall and winter ("hyemalis" = "winter"), but North Carolina also hosts a breeding population of these birds in the mountains. There, Juncos are a little bigger and sport a paler beak and more white in the tail. Researchers found no

genetic differences between these and the "yankee" Juncos, but with 15+ subspecies of "hyemalis" recognized, much work remains. In the field, much work has been done on Junco ecology, behavior, and physiology. Ted Simons and Becky Hylton at NCSU are currently studying the potential effects of calcium depletion on the nest success of "Carolina" Juncos in the Smokies. Carolina Juncos are partial altitudinal migrants, and the majority of males reside higher up than females. The moniker "junco" derives from "juncos," the rush, which has little to do with this species. Go figure. ~John Gerwin

Mark your calendar for this upcoming field trip

#### Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge

January 25-27

Contact Lena at 571-0388 or lena\_gallitano@ncsu.edu.

### Annual Event

#### Christmas Bird Count Saturday, Dec. 15

Mark your calendars now for the 108th Annual Christmas Bird Count. John Connors and John Gerwin are organizing the count — contact them at john.connors@ncmail.net or john.gerwin@ncmail.net and they will assign you to a section to count within our counting circle.

This year we will conclude the day with a pot-luck dinner at Jim and Gerry Luginbuhl's house at 6 p.m. Bring a dish to share. Get directions to their house by emailing jluginbuhl@nc.rr.com.

## President's Message

### Renew Ourselves — Take a Walk in the Woods

We are coming to the end of 2007. What a year! We worked hard (very hard) to save our local nature parks, and it looks like we have succeeded. Horseshoe Farm park was quite a battle, but as of now the city is working on a plan that will preserve the unique environment found there while opening the park to walkers, paddlers, and nature lovers. We still need to be watchful at Durant Park, but it looks like we may be able to save it from nearby development, with the runoff problems that would threaten sensitive wildlife habitat. We will maintain our vigilance in the coming year, to make sure that these and other special areas are preserved for us and future generations.

2007 was a year that tested our will and perseverance. We need natural open space to boost our spirits!

With all of the stress in so many of our lives, thank goodness we have some beautiful places nearby where we can seek refuge. The sounds of birds fill the air. As the leaves fall, longer vistas are revealed. We see the contours of the land and the structure of the large trees that make such a refreshing canopy in the warm months of the year.

Be sure to come out and enjoy birding in the winter months. Coming up this month is the Christmas Bird Count, a

fine tradition. How great to be outdoors chasing birds rather than in a mall chasing bargains. Start a new family tradition by spending the morning with us; all are welcome at the bird count. Share in a potluck dinner with fellow birders Saturday night, and review the day's adventures and "best birds." For another great new tradition, head out to Horseshoe Farms for a New Year's Day hike. Maybe you and your children and/or grandchildren will spot a flock of wild turkeys. Deer and fox are also often seen. What a gift! Walk down along the Neuse River and look for Great Blue Herons. Listen for the raucous call of the Belted Kingfisher.

Wherever you go, take a deep breath and be happy!

Wake Audubon t-shirts, coffee mugs, and tote bags are still available.

They make great holiday gifts! Contact Beth Hawkins at 835-2650 for information.

please remember to thank our sponsor



## News of Interest

### Trips to Lumber River IBA Planned for 2008

— There will be four scheduled bird census-taking trips to the Lumber River IBA in 2008 on the following dates:

- **January 12-13:** winter migrants in the IBA
- **April 12-13:** early spring migrants passing through
- **June 7-8:** breeding birds
- **October 4-5:** fall migrants passing through

Hotel or camping reservations can be made for the Friday night prior to the start of each count, or participants can drive down early on Saturday morning. The counts themselves will be conducted on Saturday and Sunday. We hope that all Wake Audubon members will participate at least one of the four times.

### 8th Annual Birdathon/Wildathon Tally

— The 2007 Wake Audubon Birdathon/Wildathon was a great success! All those participating counted as many birds or other species of vertebrate animals as they or their team could in a 24-hour period to raise money for the Audubon N.C. Coastal Islands Sanctuaries and N.C. Herpetological Society.

There were several teams this year including the infamous "Dream Team" of nature experts that included members Jeff Beane, Bob Davis, John Finnegan, Stephanie Horton, and Todd Pusser. This team found interesting, hard to see animals such as a Greater Siren, Rafinesque's Big-eared Bats, Merlin, and Scarlet Snake as well as more common species. In addition, the "Dream Team" raised the most money and identified the most species. Congratulations!

Thanks to all teams participating, a total of \$3,643.40 was raised. A big thank you to all of this year's teams.

### Act Locally Holiday Edition

\* Joy  
Happy  
Holidays  
Birds use trees  
Christmas Trees  
Trees provide oxygen  
Use wood chips for mulch  
Christmas trees are renewable  
Buy a tree locally grown in NC  
Trees can be recycled for fish habitat  
Add trees to brushpile for wildlife habitat  
Christmas trees can be recycled in many ways  
Trees can be recycled for beachfront erosion prevention  
Trees can be recycled for lake and river shoreline stabilization  
Recycle other holiday waste too, such as wrapping paper and cards  
Artificial trees contain non-biodegradable plastics, and may contain lead

Reduce  
Reuse  
Recycle