



Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society

www.nwarkaudubon.org

NEWSLETTER

August 2010

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE FOR 2010.

August 14, 2010 (Saturday) State Fish Hatchery at Centerton

September 12, 2010 (Sunday) Lake Atalanta in Rogers

October 2, 2010 (Saturday) Ninestone Land Trust, in Carroll County

October 17, 2010 (Sunday) Woolsey Wet Prairie and Wilson Springs in Fayetteville

November 20, 2010 (Saturday) Lake Fayetteville

December 2010 Fayetteville Christmas Bird Count. Date to be announced.

For details concerning times and locations and other information about the field trips, contact Joe Neal at <joeneal@uark.edu>

PUBLIC PROGRAMS FOR 2010

NWAAS and the Omni Center for Peace, Justice and Ecology will co-host a screening of the **"Defend the Gulf" video series** at the Omni Center at 3274 N. Lee Avenue in Fayetteville on **Sunday, August 29th from 5 to 7pm.**

The **2010 Annual NWAAS Photography Contest Awards** at the **Shiloh Museum in Springdale at 1-4 pm on Saturday October 16** with bird questions for the **Bird Guys**, Doug James and Joe Neal, then Lynn Scuibato and her **live birds of prey** from the Morning Star Wildlife Center.

Photo Contest rules—By October 1, 2010, mail 1 to 5 images on a CD, each an 8X10 jpg file, to 4779 Cedar Ridge Dr., Springdale, AR72764-7421. Name the category for each photo (Birds, General Nature, or Scenic) and enclose \$5 for each photo entered plus entrant's name, address, and phone (checks payable to Arkansas Audubon Society). **Detailed rules** appear on the Exhibits web page of the **Photographic Society of Northwest Arkansas**. Obtain **flyers** at Bedford Camera and Video, Collier Photo, and Shiloh Museum.

Joanie Patterson will present a program, **"Coastal Louisiana, Wonderland in Peril"** at Nightbird Books on Dickson Street on **Sunday, December 5th, at 6pm.**

Message from the President

by Doug James

BIODIVERSITY

I joyfully announce that 2010 is the United Nations' International Year of Biodiversity and a meeting of nations in Japan will address the issue of global biological diversity. Biodiversity refers to the numbers of plants and animals in various regions and how to save them from perceived threats, which requires knowledge of global ecosystems and their habitats. This effort will protect decreasing and endangered species. Areas with especially rich biodiversity or harboring endangered species must be identified and preserved.

Biodiversity of birds became an issue years ago through National Audubon's Important Bird Area program (IBA), which also has a worldwide component. In 2001 Audubon Arkansas in Little Rock convened the Arkansas IBA Technical Committee to review IBA proposals. The committee is composed of biologists, conservationists, and bird watchers. I am the current committee Chair.

There are 29 IBAs in Arkansas, 8 also enjoy global recognition. Each has a unique focus concerning groups of birds or specific species. The five in northwestern Arkansas are: State Fish Hatchery at Centerton (water birds), Flint Creek Power Plant near Gentry (wintering Bald Eagles, water birds), Cherokee Prairies near Charleston (rare prairie birds), Fort Chaffee east of Fort Smith (scrub-shrub & prairie birds), Ozark National Forest main unit (nesting forest birds).

View all Arkansas IBAs by accessing <ar.audubon.org> and exploring the links. Anyone may nominate an IBA. Criteria and forms are linked at the bottom of <What Makes Arkansas' Important Bird Areas Important?> including instructions on adopting an IBA. Adopting an IBA, by individuals or by interested groups, is a very important and worthwhile activity.

Mission of the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society

The mission of the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world through education, environmental study, and habitat protection, and to promote awareness and enjoyment of local and regional natural areas.

**Northwest Arkansas
Audubon Society**

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COASTAL LOUISIANA TRIP by Joanie Patterson

National Wildlife Federation, Environmental Defense Fund and the National Audubon Society are working together for the coastal and wetland restoration in Louisiana. They invited chapters of the National Audubon Society from several states to attend the Restoring Coastal Louisiana tour and workshop from January.15-17. Attendees were first given an overview of the situation facing coastal Louisiana, the goals of the partnership and the plans for the workshop.. Saturday was spent on a local field trip where we saw at first hand the great wealth of wildlife and the tremendous loss of coastal lands. Sunday morning we participated in a workshop to learn about the proposed solutions and advocacy.

On our field trip we saw birds such as the Brown Pelicans, Tricolored Herons and Roseate Spoonbills, as well as Nelson Sparrows, Seaside Sparrows and a Clapper Rail. At Grand Isle we were thrilled and amazed when a Barn Owl flew across the trail. David Muth our guide for the trip is an experienced birder and conservationist. He eloquently described the problems facing Louisiana due to encroachment by the ocean. He pointed out rows of dead live oak killed by invading salt water. Trees such as these provide vital habitat for migratory songbirds birds that may face storms and headwinds crossing the Gulf of Mexico. A few adjectives I've found to describe my impressions are breath-taking, intricate, mutable and heart-breaking.

We've lost over 2,300 square miles of coastal wetlands but we can rejoice that there is a solution, which David also discussed. The vital tool is **river diversions** to redirect part of the Mississippi water and sediment to begin rebuilding the shrinking wetlands. There are restoration projects underway to restore lost or damaged wetlands and manage water and sediment to benefit inland swamps and coastal marshes. These projects are doable and would not only restore diverse wild places; they would help to avoid such disasters as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

At the workshop we learned about congressional processes and how to become an effective advocate. We were encouraged to write letters to local newspapers and to meet with our representatives. Soon an activist page will be available with the information needed to effectively contact our representatives and encourage them to support this appropriation. Find out more by accessing <<http://louisianacoast.audubon.org/news-events/audubons-brian-moore-comments-president-obamas-budget-requests-coastal-louisiana-restoration>>

Waterthrush Field Trip by Joanie Patterson

April 3, 2010, was a lovely day for the Northwest Arkansas Audubon field trip to Ponca to help Leesia Marshall-Rosenberg with her field research on the Louisiana Waterthrush. We met Leesia at the Elk Education Center. There we divided into groups. Three of us explored Leatherwood Creek, covering 1.75km. We heard at least 5 waterthrushes, perhaps as many as 7 in our area. We saw three: a pair and a single male. Fortunately we had good looks at these, and none had leg bands. Leesia's group (three people) covered 1 km and found one banded male on his territory of four years at the top of Adds Creek pairbonding with an unbanded female. There was also another bird in that territory wearing only a single metal band. On another two territories there were two unbanded, currently unmated, males. The Steele Creek group (two people) covered 1.5 km and found the usual compliment of five territorial males. Of the three that they saw, they were able to get binoculars on one of these and saw it was banded with a single metal band and the others were unbanded.

It appeared that most males were not yet mated, females have not all arrived, and nesting has not yet begun for those that have. The Louisiana Waterthrushes that were only banded with metal bands were those that were banded as nestlings in 2006 and 2007. All nestlings banded in 2008 were color banded. The interesting thing to note is that with most males color-banded in 2005 and 2006 the number of color banded males is declining (average life span 7 years) and the offspring of 2006 and 2007 are taking these vacant territories. Question: where have they been these last three years? Nearby? Adjacent streams? Where are the color banded fledglings of 2008??

Many thanks to Leesia for sharing with us this wonderful place. I cannot begin to describe the loveliness of Leatherwood Creek, with its waterfalls and splendid rock formations.

RECENT FIELD TRIPS by Joe Neal

Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society organized and or promoted 12 field trips between March and July 2010. The following trips were mainly directed by NWAAS: March 27 (**Shores Lake**), April 3 (**upper Buffalo River**), April 17 (**Ninestone Land Trust**), April 18 (**Hobbes State Park-Conservation Area**, Benton Co.), April 25 (**Centerton**), May 2 (**Lake Fayetteville**), May 15 (**Chesney Prairie Natural Area**), June 5 (**upper Buffalo River**), July 11 (**Chesney Prairie Natural Area**). Attendance varied from 10-30+, with an average of about 20. In addition, we joined in to promote **Birder's Weekend at Devil's Den State Park**, including a field trip and a public lecture in the park by Joe Neal on May 1. NWAAS encouraged birders to participate in **International Migratory Bird Day**, with events on May 8 (Benton Co.) and May 9 (Washington Co.).

Highlights from these trips include (1) finding a Brown-headed Nuthatch nest on March 27 – this is the only area in the western Ozarks where these birds occur; (2) April 3 – Leesia Marshall-Rosenberger and her research on Louisiana Waterthrushes; (3) April 17 – an interesting late Hermit Thrush and an amazing waterfall; (4) April 25 – swallow migration, including 5 species; (5) May 2: a view of the recent prairie restoration efforts and gnatcatchers building nests; (6) May 15: Willow Flycatcher and Bell's Vireo; (6) June 5: Cerulean Warblers; (7) July 11: fabulous native wildflowers and LOTS of Dickcissels with easy access provided by Joe Woolbright.

Leaders for these trips included **Bill Beall, Leesia Marshall-Rosenberger & Joanie Patterson, Cathy Ross, Don Matt & Judith Griffith, David Chapman, and Joe Neal**. The coordinator for International Migratory Bird Day in Washington and Benton counties is **Mike Mlodinow**. The trip on June 5 was a joint effort by NWAAS and the **Disorganized Birder's Club**, which showed up in force, and contrary to their name, well-organized! I hope NWAAS can get more involved with the annual **Birder's Weekend at Devil's Den SP**. Field trips at this year's event were organized or lead by **Park Interpreters Rebekah Spurlock and Adam Leslie** from the park, and **Karen Garrett**. – Joe Neal

UPCOMING EVENTS by Stephanie Cribbs

Audubon Arkansas and the Beaver Lake Water District and Partners will be hosting the **Annual Secchi Day** on Saturday, August 21st, from 8:30am to 2pm at the Prairie Creek Area on Beaver Lake. The day includes secchi dips to test for water clarity as well as water sampling. For more information, please call 479-717-3807 or visit the website at <www.bwdh2o.org> In other news, **Dr. Doug Tallamy**, author of *Bringing Nature Home* will be giving a **book talk** on Friday, August 21st at 6pm at the University of Arkansas Global Campus at 2 E. Center Street in Fayetteville. The fee for this is \$15 and proceeds will benefit Fayetteville in Bloom and the Washington County Jr. Master Gardeners. For more information contact Cindi Cope at 479 521 0934 or <copceindi@aol.com>

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

C0ZB5207

Mail to: Bill Beall, Treasurer, 2204 Hendricks Blvd., Fort Smith, AR 72903-3422

Name: _____

Street: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address: _____

PLEASE SELECT:

_____ **\$20 Introductory Membership to the National Audubon Society** which is for 1 year and includes subscriptions to both the Audubon Magazine and the NWAAS newsletter, and membership in both the National and Northwest Arkansas Audubon Societies. **Please make check payable to the National Audubon Society.** (Note that after the first year, annual membership is \$40.00 per year.)

_____ **\$15 Local Chapter Membership** –which includes 1 year's membership in the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society only. You will receive the NWAAS Newsletter. 100% of your membership fee is used for NWAAS activities in Northwest Arkansas. **Please make check payable to the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society**