



THE MARSHLANDER

NEWSLETTER OF THE OGEECHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA
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WWW.OGEECHEEAUDUBON.ORG

Ogeechee Audubon Mission
Ogeechee Audubon educates adults and children about birds,
wildlife, and the environment. We provide opportunities to enjoy the world around
us, and advocate for responsible public policy and legislation for the conservation of
our natural resources.

Please Join Ogeechee Audubon Society

Tuesday, June 18th at 7:00 PM

Gifts of Nature

Speaker: Phyllis Limbacher Tildes

Phyllis Limbacher Tildes is an award-winning author and illustrator of two dozen picture books for children, infants to about eight years old. Her passion for nature and wildlife is reflected in many of her titles.

Phyllis will be showing the steps of creating the art for her children's books and talking about the research, writing and path to publication as well.

Phyllis earned a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design and was awarded European Honors to study in Rome, Italy in her senior year.

After many years as a graphic designer, she decided to pursue her dream to create books for children. In 1995 her first book, *Counting on Calico*, was published. In January 2020 her 25th book, *Bunny's Big Surprise*, will be released.

Phyllis and husband, Bill, moved from Connecticut to Savannah in 1999. They love watching birds and wildlife seen near their lagoon on Skidaway Island.

Phyllis will have her books for sale. (cash or checks only)

A percentage of the sales will be donated to OAS.

We meet at the First Presbyterian Church,
520 E. Washington Ave, Savannah.

Ogeechee Audubon Society Officers and Board

Administrative Responsibilities

President	Leslie Weichsel
Vice President	Mary Lambright
Secretary	Marty Foxx
Treasurer	Pam Smith

Membership Workgroup

Member Enrollment	Debbie Bennett
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Education Workgroup

Education Outreach	Diana Churchill, Sue DeRosa
Field Trips	Mary Sweeney-Reeves
Programs	Lynn Wrenn

Communications Workgroup

Social Media	Mary Lambright
Webmaster	Mary Lou Dickson
Newsletter	Leslie Weichsel
Publicity	Sandy Beasley

Conservation Workgroup

Entire Board

Field Trips

BRING BINOCULARS, HAT, SUNSCREEN, BUG
SPRAY, WATER AND SNACKS OR LUNCH FOR
ALL FIELD TRIPS



SAT, JUN 22: Lake Mayer Community

Park – 7:30 am to 9:30 am. We will be looking for summer warblers, terns,

gulls, kites and you never know what we will see at this small lake in the middle of Savannah! Meet at the left side of the main parking lot at 7:30 am. Leader: Larry Carlile, L.carlile259@comcast.net or 912-224-1796. Trip Rigor: Easy

SAT, JUL 20: Savannah Wildlife Refuge – 8 am to 10 am.

We will be searching for fledgling gallinules, least bitterns, kites, indigo buntings, and possibly roseate spoonbills. We will travel by car to various spots. Meet at Laurel Hill Wildlife Dr at 8:00 am. Leader: Mary Lou Dickson, marylou@dicksonimages.com. Trip Rigor: Easy

All field trips are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted!

Please be sure to check OAS website or our Facebook page prior to each field trip to be sure there are no changes to the scheduled field trip.

Save the Date – August 23rd and 24th

The University of Georgia Extension Service will conduct a statewide Pollinator Census on August 23rd and 24th. It is modeled after the Great Backyard Bird Count that you are already familiar with. Just spend 15 minutes on one of those 2 dates identifying pollinating insects on your favorite garden plant and upload the information. You can make your identification anywhere there are plants in bloom.

Please go to the following website for more information:

<https://ggapc.org/>

Message from Membership







Hello all OAS Members!

Thank you to everyone for getting your membership into OAS for 2019. You will continue to enjoy this great newsletter and all notices to keep you up to date on past birding adventures and upcoming events. If you know any potential new members please share the membership form with them, and remind any old members who have not joined as a member for 2019 that they can always re-up anytime. Thanks for your continued support.

Debbie Bennett, Membership Chair

Please Welcome our Newest Ogeechee Audubon Members!!!

-  Alan Bailey
-  Richard Krauss
-  Carl Plaskon
-  Sherry Vallee



Check out our website and like us on Facebook

www.ogeecheeaudubon.org



***Please note if you Unsubscribe from the Ogeechee Audubon email list you will not receive our notices nor the Newsletter.**

Field Notes – Quite a Busy Spring!

Okefenokee NWR - (East side near Folkston)

By Mary Lou Dickson

On March 16th eight brave souls from Ogeechee Audubon joined up with members of Coastal Georgia Audubon for



their field trip to Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge near Folkston, Georgia. Bob Sattelmeyer greeted us at the east entrance as we

listened to the awaking forest and what sounded like coyotes in the distance. When the group finally formed, there were about thirty, but Bob's knowledge of the refuge made managing the large group appear seamless.

We first stopped at the Visitor Center area and walked along the Suwannee Canal on the Cane Pole Trail. The large group broke into smaller groups which constantly formed and reformed as different birds were sighted. While it was a bit early for migrants, we had numerous looks at Yellow-rumped Warblers who were putting on their breeding feathers. In between, we had Wood Ducks, Osprey and Woodpeckers, both Downy and Red-Bellied.

Next, we moved to the Swamp Island Drive or wild life drive to further explore the refuge. Here we found the birds of the Long Leaf Pine Forest we were looking for, Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers, Bachman's Sparrows, Pine Warblers, and Brown-headed Nuthatches. Bob found a great spot for the Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers, who were singing and chasing each other around the trees. We all got great looks. While watching the woodpeckers we heard a lone Northern Bobwhite.

Our final stop of the day, was the walk to the Tower on the Boardwalk Trail. Again, an easy trail where everyone walked at their own pace, meeting new people along the way. We had a brief encounter with a foraging raccoon, simply going about his business. At the end of the boardwalk, for those who still had the stamina, was the overlook tower climb, which provided great looks into the swamp. From the top, the tree tops were at eye level giving incredible views of a singing Yellow-throated Warbler. Ah, not to have warbler-neck, it was wonderful.

On the walk back to the cars, the resident Sandhill Cranes made their presence known, but refused to give us any looks. Still, their call added something to the atmosphere of the place and reminded everyone, we must come back again!



Looking for Migrants in Forsyth Park

By Sandy Beasley

Ogeechee Audubon members (and other birders in the know) eagerly look forward to Fridays in April when Diana Churchill leads her now famous early morning bird walks in Forsyth Park. The main targets of these trips are any migrants winging their way to more northerly places to find mates, build nests and raise families. This year was no exception. The results are IN! Although the first planned walk was canceled based on reports of severe bad weather, the rest of the walks were held including one the first Friday in May. During the course of our walks, 63 species were seen. The prize migrants are the warblers but other migrants show up as well. Our groups ticked off a total of 12 warblers this season. In addition to our commonly found warblers (think Black & White, Yellow-Rumped) also spotted were Cape May, Black-throated Blue and Black-throated Green warblers, Hooded and Worm-eating warblers. Besides warblers vireos, flycatchers, waxwings and woodpeckers were found. Although on the last walk on May 3 we didn't get a single warbler, there were 2 pleasant finds: a Barred Owl

serenely perched on an oak limb hanging above a sidewalk and a Red-shouldered Hawk tending her nest with 2 nestlings poking their dandelion-like feathered heads up to beg for breakfast. Other migrants came from the human species with visitors from Washington State, Oregon, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, South Carolina, Florida, Chatham and surrounding counties. One birding visitor planned her vacation to Savannah so she could take part in 3 of OAS's field trips! (I told you Diana's walks were now famous!)

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"Birds, Bees, and Blooms: Celebrating the Beauty of Spring" event at the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens

By Stan Gray

On Saturday, April 27, Ogeechee Audubon played a major role facilitating and supporting the first ever "Birds, Bees, and Blooms: Celebrating the Beauty of Spring" event at the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens (CGBG), which more than 350 people attended. Stan Gray, OAS member and volunteer iris specialist at the CGBG, chaired the event, which featured a day in the gardens showcasing all that is worth celebrating come spring in Savannah, floral and faunal. The day started with an 8:00 AM bird walk by OAS member Larry Carlile, who led a dedicated group of birders through the 52-acre property of the Gardens in search of spring migrants and early breeders. They were not disappointed, as 35 species were spotted, to include a first-ever Gardens record of 50 Bobolink foraging in a newly planted cover crop patch. That record upped the # of species seen on property to 142. Ironically, Stan had just created a visual display of the birds of the CGBG, presented as part of the OAS exhibit, that featured the 141 species observed there; updates are already in order!

OAS Treasurer, Pam Smith followed suit by leading several bird walks throughout the morning and early afternoon targeted towards novices and others who wanted to bird but were afraid to go with "the experts". In fact, Pam reported that these walks were very successful in attracting the general public, for whom

binoculars were provided thanks to Diana Churchill and Wild Birds Unlimited.

At the same time, OAS members John Williamson, Mary Sweeney-Reeves, Miriam Litchfield, and Marty Foxx entertained the event participants with a wonderful display of educational materials focused on how to make one's home more conducive to birds and other wildlife, as well as general discussions of which birds make the Low Country their home at various times of the year. Numerous bird feeders of different designs and purposes were set on display, along with which feed mixes attract which birds, best practices for setting up feeder stations, and a display of the tools of the birder, to include binoculars, spotting scopes, field guides and other reference materials (both hard copy and digital were introduced to the public). Our thanks to Wild Birds Unlimited for lending items to help make many of these displays possible. Many thanks also to John Williamson for loaning numerous feeders and seed types for the display.

Children were even treated to a Nature Scavenger Hunt by Sarah Lucas, 3rd grade teacher at Hesse Elementary School and long-time friend of OAS, who used bird clues such as bird nests to send young people on a fascinating discovery adventure of the Gardens with nature as the guide.

All in all, it was a very successful day for the CGBG, OAS, and for the birds of the Coastal Empire!



Webb Wildlife Management Area - A Birder's Paradise

By John Williamson

On Sunday April 28th more than 15 OAS birders joined Steve Wagner at the Webb Wildlife Management Area in Garnett, SC for an amazing morning of birding. The weather could not have been better, and the day didn't waste any time delivering a fantastic variety. Two of the first species spotted were the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and the Bachman's Sparrow. Both birds were lifers for several of those participating. The success didn't stop there. Although the Red-cockaded stole the show, the other woodpeckers were out in force and included the Downy, Red-headed, Red-bellied, and Pileated species. Warblers were not to be ignored with Northern Parula, Prothonotary, Palm, Prairie, and Black-throated Blue being among those counted. Both the Arcadian and the Great Crested Flycatchers were spotted also. Buntings were represented by both the Painted and Indigo species. Blue Grosbeaks, Summer Tanagers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Orchard Orioles, and three varieties of Vireos also made appearances. Even a Mississippi Kite gave quite the air show for those watching. Other highlights of the day included being able to see nesting pairs of Anhingas with breeding plumage and chicks still in the nest being fed. In the same area, more than 35 Little Blue Herons were counted.

The variety of habitats, the season of the year, and the expertise of our leader Steve and other seasoned birders made this a very successful and enjoyable field trip. It provided ample opportunities to practice birding by sight, as well as hone skills needed for birding by ear. Of particular interest was a guest birder who had traveled all the way from the West Coast specifically to bird with us during the weekend. I, for one, would say she picked one of the best weekends to see OAS birders at our best.



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Fort Stewart – Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers and More

By Lynn Wren

On May 11th, the OAS, along with Coastal Georgia Audubon Society, met Larry Carlile to observe the federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) on Fort Stewart Military Reservation. Fort Stewart harbors about 90,000 acres of longleaf pine habitat, the largest RCW population in Georgia and the 3rd largest RCW population anywhere (behind Apalachicola National Forest and Eglin Air Force Base). Other Fort Stewart species protected under the Endangered Species Act include; the threatened frosted flatwoods salamander (the only viable population in Georgia), the threatened eastern indigo snake, the endangered Atlantic and shortnose sturgeons, the threatened wood stork, and the endangered smooth coneflower. Bald eagles also nest on the Installation and are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Many other state listed species occur on Fort Stewart such as the Bachman's sparrow, Rafinesque's big-eared bat, giant orchid, gopher tortoise, and striped newt.

It was a beautiful morning for birding and we were fortunate to observe RCWs feeding their nestlings as pine woods treefrogs sang their unmusical song ("Kek-kek-kek-kek-kaa-egg!") and several Bachman's sparrows sang nearby ("Heeeere kittykittykittykitty"). Using a "peeper pole," we viewed the 2 or 3-day-old RCWs on a small video monitor. The RCW is a denizen of mature and parklike southern pine forests and is the only woodpecker species in the world that excavates cavities in living pine trees. The RCW is a cooperative breeder, which means that RCWs live in family groups that include the breeding pair and 1 or more offspring (usually males) that remain in their natal cluster with their parents to help raise subsequent year's chicks. Only 6% of the world's bird species exhibit cooperative breeding. Other birds seen or heard in the RCW cluster included Turkey Vulture, Redheaded Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Eastern Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-throated warbler, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Eastern Towhee, Northern Parula, Pine Warbler (with fledglings), Prairie Warbler, Summer Tanager, and Northern Cardinal.

Predators of the RCW include climbing snakes (e.g., yellow rat snakes and corn snakes), flying squirrels that eat eggs and nestlings in the nest cavity, and Cooper's hawks, who are adept aerial predators. Many other

species are known to usurp nesting and roosting cavities of RCWs (e.g., Eastern Bluebirds, Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, and paper wasps).

Next, we headed to bottomland hardwoods associated with the Canoochee River floodplain and passed some large stands of cinnamon fern along the way. As we walked along a causeway through the wetland we heard or observed Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Great Blue and Little Blue Herons, Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites, White-eyed, Yellow-throated, and Red-eyed Vireos, among other species previously seen at the RCW cluster. Our last 2 stops comprised a clear-cut and 3 recreational fishing ponds. Highlights included Spotted Sandpipers, a Yellow-breasted Chat singing from a dense sweetgum copse, and a Swallow-tailed Kite dive bombing a couple of immature Bald Eagles as well as 4 Anhinga flying very high above the kite and eagles.

Many thanks to Larry Carlile for the sharing information about southeastern ecosystems and their bird populations. Thanks also to Pam Smith for her birding help and great ear.

XX



photo - Beautiful Sunbird (Kenya)

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU

to the Ogeechee Audubon Board especially Mary Lambright for covering for me in my absence. I returned on May 19th after being away since the beginning of March.

I was in Kenya for two months then traveled to Egypt and Europe.

I am happy to be back home. I saw many birds – the accidental birder and the accidental photographer!

Leslie

Ogeechee Audubon Chapter Membership Form – 2019

New membership _____ Renewal _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (h) _____ (c) _____

e-mail* _____

*** Our newsletter is delivered by e-mail**

As a member, you will be notified by e-mail about upcoming meetings, events and important conservation issues.

Please mail this form with your check to:

**Ogeechee Audubon, Attn Membership, PO Box 13424,
Savannah, GA 31416**

Contributions are tax deductible.

Ogeechee Audubon-\$20.00/household _____

Includes the *Marshlander*

Senior (over 62) or Student - \$15/household _____

Includes the *Marshlander*

Special Contribution _____

Total: _____

Ogeechee Audubon membership is based on the calendar year – January to December.

Send your *National Audubon membership dues* directly to National.

OAS Chapter renewals are accepted until March 31st.

***Please help us save the trees. If you receive the Newsletter by printed mail and can receive it electronically via e-mail let Debbie Bennett (mburdsal@comcast.net) know so we no longer print it, mail it and use paper unnecessarily. Audubon cares about the environment and also about you. Therefore, if you do not have access to email we will be happy to send you a printed copy.**