

THE SNIPE

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The Newsletter of the Audubon Society of Central Arkansas

www.ascabird.org



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ASCA's Christmas Potluck & Silent Auction December 8, 2005 Magnolia Lodge, in Little Rock

Come join us on Thursday, **December 8th** from **6:00 – 9:00 pm** at **Magnolia Lodge** for our **Annual Christmas Potluck and Silent Auction**.

This fun event is a great opportunity not only to enjoy some wonderful food, but also spread some holiday cheer and exchange stories with fellow birders.

We will hold our **Silent Auction** again this year, which is a critical source of funds for ASCA. Auction items can be purchased or hand made. Please let me know, no later than, Monday Dec. 5th what item or items you are donating. You can email me, at ctboyles@aristotle.net

If you are bringing an item, please be there before 6:00 pm so we can get your item labeled and in place. We will begin accepting bids for the auction around 6:15 and will sit down for dinner around 6:30. ASCA will provide the drinks, plates, cups and eating utensils.

Dottie Boyles
Silent Auction Chairman

Magnolia Lodge is located at **5304 West Markham Street** in Little Rock. To get there from Little Rock or North Little Rock:

From **I-630**, take the **Fair Park Blvd** exit – **Exit 4**. Head **north** on **Fair Park Blvd** to **Markham Street** (0.6 mi). Turn **Left** on **Markham Street**, go about a block and a half (0.1 mi).

Magnolia Lodge will be on the **Right** between **Harrison** and **N. Tyler Streets**. The parking lot is located behind the building. There is a driveway off Markham Street between Magnolia Lodge and Steven-Dell Insurance or turn right on Harrison Street, then left just behind the Miller Plaza Bldg.

A special thank you to Magnolia Lodge for allowing us to use their facilities. So bring your favorite dish and come join us for lots of fun on December 8th at 6 pm.

Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Record now part of The Official Arkansas Bird Records

After reviewing evidence of the ivory-billed woodpecker gathered in the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge in April 2004 the Bird Records Committee of the Arkansas Audubon Society has voted to change the status of the bird in Arkansas from "extirpated" to "present".

Max Parker, longtime curator for the Arkansas Audubon Society, received on June 17, 2005, verifying documentation for the extraordinary record from a member of the research team. The documentation was studied at length by all members of the Arkansas Bird Records Committee before the record was accepted.

More information is available online at www.ARBIRDS.org

DeLynn Hearn
President, Arkansas Audubon Society

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

DREW PHILLIPS

Greetings Birders and Friends,

We are living in very exciting times! There are many conservation issues that ASCA is part of in one-way or another. The most exciting is the rediscovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker! There were several ASCA members involved in the initial search. They are also working this winter's search as well. Our October program drew the largest turnout in quite some time. David Luneau, who was the first person to capture the IBWO on film, gave an excellent program on his work searching for the IBWO. We are very proud and fortunate to have him as a member of Audubon Society of Central Arkansas.

We also have several conservation issues that ASCA is a participant in. As I noted previously, ASCA has signed on as a plaintiff with five individuals in a lawsuit to preserve Dark Hollow swamp in North Little Rock from being destroyed to make way for a huge Bass Pro Shop. Several weeks ago, Barry Haas was deposed by the Corps of Engineers and recently by the developer's lawyers. They were trying to have ASCA removed as a plaintiff in the lawsuit. Their contention was ASCA had no standing in the case. Barry represented us very well. I do not believe that we will be removed

from the case. However, I am glad to see that we are moving towards trying the case and I am confident we will prevail.

We are keeping a close eye on BFI and their attempt to expand their landfill capacity by using the old Coleman Dairy property across Mabelvale Pike from their current landfill site. They are proposing to dig a hole 45' deep adjacent to the convergence Fourche Creek, Coleman Creek and Rock Creek. They are running ads in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette touting their plans to promote the creation of a new city park they have named "Coleman Park". This appears to be a public relation's ploy to divert our attention from the environmental destruction they will cause if allowed to expand. Please be alert to this issue that will be making its way through the City's approval.

There are several other environmental issues of direct concern to all of us in the Central Arkansas area. There is the ongoing battle between developers and the Central Arkansas Water Commission on the development in the Lake Maumelle watershed. West Little Rock needs a new wastewater treatment plant. Its placement is a hot issue that must be resolved.

There is a group of business people wanting to make Rebsamen Road a commuter route by building a bridge over Jimerson Creek. ASCA was the primary participant in stopping this idea over 10 years ago. We must follow this closely.

As you can see this is an important and exciting time in which to live. ASCA is following these issues closely. If you want to learn more about our role in all of this, please come to our monthly business meetings that follow our programs the second Thursday of every month except December and May. We will have our annual Christmas potluck Thursday December 8th (please see details in this issue of The Snipe). This event will be for fun and fellowship.

On January 12th there will not be a program. I invite all members and interested persons to join us for our annual business meeting at 7pm in the Fletcher Library on H Street in Little Rock. This meeting will give you an opportunity to learn more about these issues and ASCA.

I hope to see you soon!

Good Birding
Drew M. Phillips
ASCA President



Support Ivory-Billed Woodpecker Conservation and Research! Buy Conservation Stamps and Prints

The "Searcher Team Series Print" with a mint conservation stamp is available now for \$315. The print is signed by four searchers – Gene Sparling, Tim Gallagher, Bobby Harrison and David Luneau. Purchase yours today at www.ibwo.org

Audubon Arkansas Celebrates the Centennial Mr. Bill Shepherd and Dr. Douglas James Honored

On October 21, Audubon Arkansas hosted the Audubon Centennial Awards Dinner at the Fayetteville Country Club in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The awards event celebrated Audubon's centennial year of protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitat that supports them. Participants included Audubon Society members, granting institutions, scientists, individual and corporate donors, and other individuals and organizations that are supporters of Audubon. John Flicker, President and CEO of National Audubon was our special guest. We honored two outstanding Ornithologists who have contributed significantly to the protection of birds in Arkansas and the development of Audubon Arkansas, Dr. Douglas James and Mr. Bill Shepherd.

The Robert Shults Award was conferred upon Dr. James, Distinguished Professor of

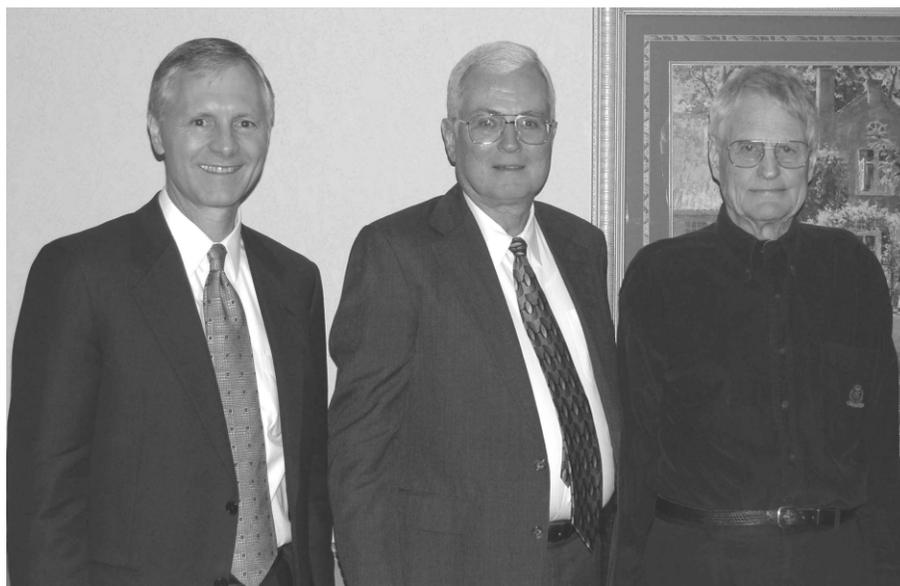
Zoology at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) and renowned researcher and teacher. Dr. James, recipient of numerous awards and honors, has taught at UAF in his areas of expertise — ecology, ornithology and vertebrate biology — since 1953. He is, perhaps best known as the senior author of *Arkansas Birds: Their Distribution and Abundance*. Co-authored by Joseph Neal, *Arkansas Birds* is the standard reference on bird life in the state. Dr. James has authored more than 80 scientific articles published in ecological and ornithological research journals, and graduated a record number of doctoral students for the UAF Department of Biological Sciences.

In 2002, the National Audubon Society established the Robert Shults Audubon Award, "to be conferred at the discretion of the Audubon Arkansas State Board to honor individuals who have made

extraordinary contributions to furthering the mission of the Audubon Society in Arkansas. Robert Shults, founding chairman and current board member of Audubon Arkansas, has been a guiding force for the organization since it was formed in 2001.

Bill Shepherd was the inaugural recipient of the Bill Shepherd Outstanding Volunteer Award established earlier this year to honor his significant service to Audubon Arkansas. When Audubon's 25th state field office opened in Arkansas, Shepherd recruited the state's premiere ornithologists to serve on the Technical Advisory Committee of the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program. During his tenure as chairman, the committee developed a comprehensive list of 62 declining bird species in Arkansas, and 21 IBA's were recognized in the state. The award also acknowledges Shepherd's countless hours of avian research.

Suzanne Langley, Associate Director of Development
Dan Scheiman, Director of Bird Conservation



John Flicker, Bill Shepherd & Douglas James

Congratulations to Kenny and LaDonna Nichols

300+ Arkansas State Birds for 2005

In January 2005, Kenny and LaDonna Nichols, of Pangburn, Arkansas, set out on a quest to log 300 species of state birds in a single year.

For anyone who has ever tried this, it is not an easy task. After all, this was their third attempt to reach a goal that Kenny's Aunt challenged them to do many years ago.

Needless to say on their quest, Kenny and LaDonna have traveled many miles on the highways, byways and dusty roads of Arkansas. They have spent many hours peering through scopes and binoculars, even sleeping in their car during a hurricane looking for that special bird to add to their list.

On November 12, 2005 their persistence and perseverance paid off. After meeting up with Joe Neal, from Fayetteville, Joe led them to a home hosting a Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird. The hummingbird made bird #300 for Kenny.

From Fayetteville they traveled northwest to Maysville, AR to see a Harris's Sparrow. This was bird #300 for LaDonna. The next day they added a Sabine's Gull to their list, which was seen at Lake Dardanelle. Just icing on the cake!

Congratulations to Kenny and LaDonna for reaching your goal, of 300 state birds for 2005. We are proud of you!!!

Christmas Bird Count Dates and Location

<u>Count</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Compiler</u>	<u>Closest town</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Crooked Creek	Wed 14 th	SallyJo Gibson	Harrison	sjogibson@alltel.net or (870) 741-5805
Bayou Deview**	Thurs 15 th	Steve Osborne	Brinkley	steve_Osborne@fws.gov or (501) 513-4479 or Leif Anderson at Leanderson@fs.fed.us
Arkadelphia	Sat 17 th	Max Parker	Arkadelphia	Max.parker@earthlink.net (501) 225-6589 or Doloras Harrington (870) 246-2729
Conway	Sat 17 th	Martha Johnson	Conway	amjohnson@alltel.net or (501) 329-5214
Little Rock	Sat 17 th	Dan Scheiman/ Drew Phillips	Little Rock	Drew Phillips at drewmilp@yahoo.com or (501) 228-5245
Fayetteville	Sun 18 th	Joe Neal	Fayetteville	jneal@fs.fed.us (479) 521-1858 or Mike Mlodinow mamlod@hotmail.com (479) 443-2663
Lonoke	Sun 18 th	Dan Scheiman/ Drew Phillips	Little Rock	Drew Phillips at drewmilp@yahoo.com or (501) 228-5245
N. Fork Illinois Bayou	Sun 18 th	John Andre	Hector	jandre@fs.fed.us or (479) 284-3150
Big Lake NWR	Mon 19 th	Allen Reams	Manila	alreams469@msn.com or (870) 763-8582
Hot Springs Village	Mon 19 th	Lynn Sackett	Hot Spgs Vlg	sackett AT hsnp.com (501) 922-9060
Magnolia- Lake Columbia	Mon 19 th	Sterling Lacy	Magnolia	slacy AT magnolia-net.com (870) 234-4910
Mountain Home	Mon 19 th	Sharon Boatright	Mtn Home	sharonb@mtnhome.com or (870) 430-5335
Holla Bend NWR	Tues 20 th	Leif Anderson	Dardanelle	Leanderson@fs.fed.us or (479) 284-3402
Pine Bluff	Wed 28 th	Rob Doster	Pine Bluff	Rdoster@uc.usbr.gov
Wappanoca NWR	Sat 31 st	Dick Preston	Turrell	(901) 837-3360 or cell # (901) 828-8384 or Van Harris (901) 876-3337
White River NWR	Tues Jan 3 rd	Keith Sutton	St. Charles	catfishdude@sbc.global.net or (501) 847-9643

**For Bayou Deview we want as many people to help as possible up to a max of 75 people. Some of the best habitat doesn't involve the Ivory-billed. We will draw names out of a hat for spots with potential for THE bird. In addition to car/ walking parties would like to see several canoe and sitting-in-one-spot parties. Please contact either compiler early if you want to be in on the drawing for Ivory-billed habitat.

Upcoming Programs of the ASCA

The ASCA meets at 7:00 PM the second Thursday of each month at the John Gould Fletcher Library, which is located at 823 Buchanan Street, on the corner of Buchanan and H Streets, just off North University Ave. The programs are free and open to the public

December 8, 2005 – ASCA Christmas Potluck and Silent Auction

The ASCA Christmas Potluck and Silent Auction will be held on Dec. 8th at Magnolia Lodge in Little Rock. The Silent Auction is a critical source of funds for our society. Please let Dottie Boyles know by Dec. 5th if you are donating items for the auction at ctboyles@aristotle.net

ASCA will provide the drinks, plates, cups and eating utensils. Bids for the auction will begin around 6:15 pm, dinner will be at 6:30 pm. So bring your favorite dish and plan now to attend this fun event.

Details and directions to Magnolia Lodge can be found on page 1.

January 12, 2006 – ASCA Annual Business Meeting

Our Annual Business Meeting will be held Jan. 12th at 7:00 pm. All ASCA members are encouraged to attend. This is your opportunity to have an input into ASCA's activities for 2006.

We still have several positions vacant and will be electing officers for 2006 as well as planning activities for the upcoming year. ASCA can only exist with active members. There will not be a program or guest speaker at this meeting.

February 9, 2006 – Life History of Longhorned Beetles

Guest Speaker: **Michael D. Warriner**
Program: **Life History and Ecology of Longhorned Beetles**

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission Field Ecologist, Michael D. Warriner will present a program regarding the role of insects in the diet of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. The Longhorned Beetle, is an insect presumed to be an important food resource for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. The life history and ecology of this group of beetles will be discussed.

Arkansas Rare Bird Alert (RBA)

The RBA lists rare and unusual birds found throughout the state, and if possible directions to these birds. To report or hear the latest sightings, call **(501) 753-5853**. The number is listed as J.J. Audubon in the phone book, the only white page listing with the last name Audubon.

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Vacant:
Education, Outreach,
Publicity, Christmas and
Migratory Counts



ASCA Field Trip Schedule

The ASCA sponsors numerous field trips throughout the year. The trips are open to all and carpooling is available for trips outside of Little Rock. This is a great opportunity for novice birders to meet and learn their birds from more experienced birders. Perhaps a chance to get a life bird for those dedicated birders. Check out the web site at www.ascabird.org or contact Drew Phillips at (501) 568-3182 or (501) 228-5248 for more information about upcoming field trips.

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*December 2005*

## Lonoke and Little Rock Christmas Bird Counts

We will participate in the annual Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Counts. The **Little Rock Christmas Count** will be held on **Saturday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>** and the **Lonoke Christmas Count** will be held on **Sunday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>**. To participate in a count, contact Drew Phillips at [drewmilp@yahoo.com](mailto:drewmilp@yahoo.com). For more information on Christmas Bird Counts go to [www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/105thsummary.html](http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/105thsummary.html)

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January 21, 2006

Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge

We will meet at **Christ the King Catholic Church parking lot on Rodney Parham Road**, just south of **Hwy 10 at 7:30 AM**. We will carpool to the **Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge**. Our target birds will be Bald Eagles, waterfowl and sparrows. Bring a sack lunch and plenty of water. The walking will be held to short level trails. This is a great trip for everyone. We should arrive at Holla Bend around 9:30 for anyone who wants to meet us there.

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*February 25, 2006*

## Stuttgart Airport

We will meet at the **Commuter Parking Lot at I-630 and Shackelford Road at 7:30 AM** and carpool to the **Stuttgart Airport**. Highlights from last year' trip included Lapland Longspur, Smith Longspur, Horned Lark, Northern Bobwhite and Northern Harrier to name a few. Several ponds of ducks can also be viewed along the way. Bring a sack lunch and plenty of water. Call Drew Phillips at (501) 228-5245 for more information.



This Burrowing Owl was spotted in a ditch just off Roosevelt Road in Little Rock on Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, very few birders were able to enjoy a look at this cute little guy, as he apparently left the next day.

The photograph on the left was taken by LaDonna Nichols of Pangburn. Ken Dayer, of Little Rock, also has a cute photograph of the owl posted on the ASCA web site [www.ascabird.org](http://www.ascabird.org)



# *Field Trip Reports*

## Fourche Creek Float Trip

*September 20, 2005*

Fifteen canoeists eased onto Fourche Creek at around eight a.m. on September 20, 2005 for a joint-sponsored Audubon Society of Central Arkansas, Audubon Arkansas, and Sierra Club float trip. The weather was great and the scenery was beautiful. For many of the canoeist this was their first trip on Little Rock's most accessible, floatable, creek. Highlights for the birders included great looks at two **Cooper's Hawks** and **Belted Kingfishers**. In addition, a **White-eyed Vireo** was heard singing, as well as, calls from **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** and a **Northern Flicker**. The float lasted till about 11:00 a.m.

Kevin Pierson  
Arkansas Audubon

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## Lake Millwood

*October 22, 2005*

Once again, Charles Mills did an excellent job hosting the nine birders, who left Little Rock for Lake Millwood on Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Charles knows the best places to bird around the lake and is always willing to share his expertise and knowledge of birds with others.

Not long after we arrived at Beard's Bluff a beautiful **Bald Eagle** flew just a few feet above our heads. At the Okay Levee, Charles and a couple of **Screech Owls** scared each other, while he was trying to flush a **Painted Bunting** that had flown into a patch of trees. At the levee we were also treated to a close up view of twelve, very co-operative, **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** – 2 adults with 10 babies. We traveled to several areas around the lake and logged a total of 50 species for the day. Most notable were: a rare **Clay-colored Sparrow**; **Swamp, Lincoln's, Field, Song, White-throated** and **White-crowned Sparrows**; **Winter and Carolina Wrens**; **Osprey**; **Sharp-shinned** and **Red-shouldered Hawks**; **Orange-crowned** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers**; **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**; **Eastern Phoebe**; **Horned Grebe**; **Am. White Pelican**; **Redhead, Ruddy and Wood Ducks**; **Northern Pintail**; **Greater White-fronted Geese**; **White Ibis**; **Common Moorhen**; **Downy** and **Red-headed Woodpeckers**; **Northern Flicker** and **Am. Kestrel**. Thanks again to Charles for leading us around Lake Millwood and helping us locate and I.D. so many different species of birds.

Dottie Boyles

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## Lake Dardanelle

*November 12, 2005*

The morning started off cold as 5 ASCA birders left Little Rock for Lake Dardanelle. After several stops around the lake we headed to the Dam site, where we found two **Franklin Gulls** and a **Laughing Gull** among the many **Ring-billed Gulls**. From there we decided to extend the trip and follow Kenny and LaDonna Nichols on to Fayetteville where they were meeting up with Joe Neal. Joe led us first to a home in Fayetteville hosting a **Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird**. Then on to western Benton Co. in search of a **Harris's Sparrow**. We located two males, with a flock of **White-crowned Sparrows**, on a dirt road in Maysville just a few feet from the Oklahoma State line. While there several **American Pipits** flew over. On the way back to civilization we stopped to view a **Great Horned Owl**.

Fourteen hours and 500 + miles later, we logged a total of 45 species. It was a great birding day as most of the group added 2 to 6 new state or life birds to their list. It was especially exciting to be present as Kenny and LaDonna reached their 2005 goal of 300 state birds in a single year!!

Dottie Boyles