

# THE SNIPE

The Newsletter of the  
Audubon Society of Central Arkansas



Photo by Charles Mills

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## FOR MAX PARKER

By Joe Neal

Birders are never far from their binoculars and curators of bird records never far from data. Max passed away on New Years Day 2008, just as he was about to leave for northwest Arkansas to try for the Northern Shrike that Mike Mlodinow and I found on Christmas Day. It was a new bird for the state and Max had to have it. My dad had a phrase for this from the days of horse cavalry: "He died with his boots on."

In 1982, Max and Helen found a robust population of an otherwise rare bird singing in International Paper Company clearcuts near Malvern. These were Bachman's Sparrows. Max of course was not so long retired from his career as an IP Forester and IP had grown infamous for its huge clearcuts. With help from Max & Helen, Tom Haggerty studied these birds over three years (1983-1985) and published distinguished papers for his PhD.

I was working with Doug James on the book eventually published as *Arkansas Birds* (1986). It did not take me long to realize the Parkers were in a small circle of ardent birders upon which was built a venerable entity, Arkansas Audubon Society. Max and Helen faithfully and professionally reviewed drafts of the chapters and species accounts. The book is filled with their birding adventures, some indicated by name & place, others blended into species accounts. Max provided photographs of Barred Owl (209), Tufted Titmouse (253), Hermit Thrush (271), and White-crowned Sparrow (344). Photographic reproductions were not all we hoped for, but so far as I know, he never complained.

We all know they have traveled far and wide to reach the coveted ABA's 700+ North American club. But birding like theirs is more than hobby. The field work that led to

finding Bachman's habitat would involve other basic contributions. After the publication of *Arkansas Birds*, I worked with them on the Arkansas Birds Records Committee. Helen is not on the committee, but we know the business *always* includes her. My favorite phone calls between Fayetteville (or my office in Waldron) and Malvern (later, Little Rock) concerning bird records usually started with Helen answering, Helen rounding up Max, then both on the phone for give & take. It's a corporate entity: Max and Helen, Inc., former headquarters Malvern, AR, then Little Rock.

In their Malvern years Helen posted notes on the list about their favorite yard birds, such as annual spring arrival dates of Louisiana Waterthrushes. She continues to post notes from the new environment of her Little Rock home. It's the personal touch. Max was notoriously not computer-savvy, but fortunately he had Helen, and fortunately he wrote with a clear steady hand. Max's post cards came with a greeting and a request for just a "little" more information.

Trend data about North American birds is based upon analysis of summer and winter season distributions. That is, it's a mass of data in the Breeding Bird Survey and the Christmas Bird Count. Amongst all that otherwise massive anonymity, there's Max and Helen making contributions leading to understandings, hopefully informing public policies. Max & Helen served the BBS longer, for example, than the longest serving Arkansas Governor. It is ALWAYS tough to find enough ear-oriented birders to get all of the nearly 30 routes covered. So the Parkers packed themselves up and covered what others didn't: 5 routes, 8 routes, whatever; every year, all volunteer, year in and out. Personal rewards involve hearing/seeing most of the birds in a

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# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

BILL SHEPHERD

## ASCA OFFICERS

### President:

Bill Shepherd  
501-375-3918  
[stoneax63@hotmail.com](mailto:stoneax63@hotmail.com)

### Vice-president:

Dan Scheiman  
501-280-9024  
[birddan@comcast.net](mailto:birddan@comcast.net)

### Recording Secretary:

Susan Hardin  
[whizcats@sbcglobal.net](mailto:whizcats@sbcglobal.net)

### Treasurer:

Barry Haas  
501-821-4097  
[bhaas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bhaas@sbcglobal.net)

### Newsletter Editor:

Dottie Boyles  
501-224-0302  
[ctboyles@aristotle.net](mailto:ctboyles@aristotle.net)

### Board:

W. F. "Bill" Hailey  
501-225-2848

D. DeLynn Hearn  
[delynnh@iwon.com](mailto:delynnh@iwon.com)

Ed Laster  
501-868-6004  
[elaster523@sbcglobal.net](mailto:elaster523@sbcglobal.net)

Craig Provost  
[craig-daleprovost@sbcglobal.net](mailto:craig-daleprovost@sbcglobal.net)

Bill Saunders  
501-664-2539  
[wasaunders@aristotle.net](mailto:wasaunders@aristotle.net)

### Christmas Bird Count Compiler:

Dan Scheiman  
501-280-9024  
[birddan@comcast.net](mailto:birddan@comcast.net)

### Conservation:

Barry Haas  
501-821-4097  
[bhaas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bhaas@sbcglobal.net)

### Hospitality:

Doris Boyles  
501-224-0302  
[ctboyles@aristotle.net](mailto:ctboyles@aristotle.net)

### Rare Bird Alert:

D. DeLynn Hearn  
501-771-4686  
[delynnh@iwon.com](mailto:delynnh@iwon.com)

### ASCA Webmaster:

J. Lyndal York  
501-663-2192  
[lrluejay@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lrluejay@sbcglobal.net)

### Field Trip Coordinator:

Karen Holliday  
[karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us](mailto:karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us)

## Your Community Needs You

I've been given the opportunity to address all of you in the space normally reserved for our esteemed President. First let me express how delighted I am to be an active member of this organization. It is a joy to interact with like-minded birders and help the organization carry out its environmental and educational mission. Which brings me to my second and main point, about the importance of being an **active** member.

By active member I don't mean becoming an officer or board member...though that is important. I'm also not necessarily referring to attending meetings and field trips, though these are appropriate venues for what I'm getting at. I mean being an active member of the birding community. There are many actions you can take. Post your sightings to ARBIRD (and eBird). Whether you want to alert others to the rare bird you found at Stuttgart Airport or share the story of a new backyard bird, if it has to do

--Dan Scheiman, Vice President

with Arkansas birds it is appropriate for our listserv.

Don't be shy to ask questions on ARBIRD or to answer questions when you have the answer. Educating others is a great way to encourage new birders, from pointing out a chickadee to a child, to putting an Arkansas Audubon Society state checklist in the hands of **every** person who shows an interest in birds. Be sure to pick up a few extra checklists at the next AAS meeting. Also pick up some birder business cards (courtesy of Sally Jo Gibson) to leave at restaurants and hotels when you travel. Let communities know that birders stimulate their local economy, but only when they protect their local birds.

I am a firm believer that everyone is entitled to enjoy birds as they see fit, but we all benefit when we share our experiences with others.

## For Max Parker

*continued from page 1*

compact geographic area. Public rewards flow from quantitative analysis of continent-wide trends. Mike Mlodinow told me that Max did two CBCs in the weeks just before he died.

The friendship that developed between Max and I involved bird data, of course, but it also involved the fact that we both worked professionally in forest management. My career involves restoration of endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and the mature pine forests where they live. Max joked to me that he spent his career clearcutting RCW habitat. Of course, the situation is much more complex, but we did have kind of a ying & yang business, the conservative (Max) and the liberal (Joe). Our paths crossed in a fruitful way for 25 years.

The retirement path chosen by Max and his partner remains open: participating in the CBC

and BBS, contributions to the Arkansas birds database, volunteer service to AAS and its numerous leaves & branches: Trust, camp, bird records, offices, newsletter, etc. Like Mother Jones said, don't mourn for me, organize! Consider honoring Max by carrying on where he involuntarily left off. It's fertile ground with much opportunity for civic good.

As Max handed over the Curator duties to me in fall 2007, he offered some advice, attributing it to Art Johnson. "It's better not to accept a good record than to accept a poor record." I wrote it on a yellow sticky note where we sat in my Forest Service office. I keep it in front of me now, reviewing records for the society.

Max has gone on. We have the great good fortune to share the future with Helen, a dynamic person in her own right.

# *Conservation News*

*Barry Haas*

## **Threats to Lake Maumelle Watershed Continue**

After spending over \$1.2 million of ratepayer money to develop a community-based comprehensive watershed management plan ("the Plan") to protect Lake Maumelle, the main drinking water supply for about 400,000 central Arkansans, pressures from political leaders and the development community continue to try to weaken the protections proposed by the Plan.

Unanimous adoption of the Plan by the Central Arkansas Water (CAW) Board is one thing. Getting them to implement the Plan and protect our primary drinking water supply long-term is something altogether different. Within months of adopting the Plan last year, the CAW Board voted to allow development in the most critical area of the watershed, uphill from the lake's water intake pipes, violating the Plan and the public trust that had been built during its more than 18-month development.

The Pulaski County Quorum Court recently passed a 4-month moratorium on new construction in the Pulaski County portion of the watershed. During that 4-month period Pulaski County has been working to draft new regulations that will allow development in Pulaski County's portion of the watershed to take place without degrading this high quality, low cost water source. Discovering that attorneys working for the developers have been invited by the county to help draft these regulations does not bode well. Where are our political leaders when we need them most? Pulaski County Judge Buddy Villines? Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola? Where are you on the single most important issue affecting our economic well-being and quality of life?

A coalition of community organizations has been working to make sure the Plan, created by a consensus of the community, is properly implemented. The Plan would allow development, but on large lots (typically 5-acres or larger) that would reduce

the impact development would have on Lake Maumelle's water quality when the entire watershed is developed in the future.

Did you know that the Plan effectively means lower water quality in Lake Maumelle? It does. The watershed is mainly forested today, but development will bring more pollutants and runoff that will work their way into the lake and our drinking water. Property owners in the watershed have a right to develop their property, but CAW customers also have a right to clean, affordable drinking water. The Plan is a compromise of all the competing interests, protecting private property rights while also protecting the drinking water quality.

Lake Maumelle was built in the late 1950s for one purpose- to serve as a major drinking water supply for Little Rock, and now central Arkansas. The vision of leaders from that era should be applauded, and today's leaders should be striving to uphold that vision today.

It is our responsibility as citizens, and that of our elected officials, to ensure we protect our drinking water not only for our own benefit, but for our children and their children. High quality, low cost drinking water has been described by community leaders as the engine that drives our economy.

We are approaching a crossroads. We can squander this precious resource, or we can protect and preserve it and acknowledge its worth and value. You can help make the difference by contacting your elected representatives (quorum court members, Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola and Pulaski County Judge Buddy Villines) and voicing your strong support for full implementation of the Lake Maumelle watershed management plan to keep our water both clean and affordable.

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## **Proposed BFI Landfill Expansion**

Another proposed expansion of the BFI landfill on Mabelvale Pike has been put on hold while the City of Little Rock decides whether or not to privatize its own landfill. Community opposition to the most recent effort to expand the BFI landfill has been successful in keeping this landfill, located in the Fourche Creek drainage basin, from expanding in an area where a landfill should never have been allowed in the first place. This unique wetlands area is the subject of reclamation efforts by Audubon Arkansas and others in an effort to make it an environmental learning opportunity and an asset for Little Rock.

BFI has publicly indicated that if Little Rock decides to privatize its landfill, BFI would be interested in operating it and then would consider closing its own landfill on Mabelvale Pike. The BFI landfill is getting close to its present permitted capacity unless an expansion for additional acreage or increased height is approved by several regulatory agencies on both the local and state level.

Careful study is required by the City of Little Rock to make sure that the citizens of Little Rock would clearly benefit if the city's landfill is privatized. The cost per ton for dumping trash at the city's landfill is currently less than either of the two private dumps in the area. Would garbage fees in Little Rock increase if a private operator took over the Little Rock landfill?

Such an important public policy issue should, of course, involve the public. Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola should hold public meetings and explain any possible landfill privatization in detail, and seek input from citizens as a very early part of the process.

# The 300

*By Dennis Braddy*

My quest ended November 17, 2007. Standing on a gravel road ten miles from Jonesboro, Nick Anich and I had just scoped several Cackling Geese in a large flock of Greater White-fronted. After 40,000 miles on the road, endless hours of driving in the dark while fighting sleep, burying the Prius in mud three times, running the battery down once, receiving one richly deserved speeding ticket and one warning, and discovering whole new genera of DEET-swilling, biting, and orifice-seeking gnats, what did I feel at that precise moment? Relief, to be sure, but mainly I felt resolute. Arkansas year-bird 300 represented the achievement of my public goal, but the real goal, the private one, remained.

Those of you who have read my posts know that I took doing an Arkansas Big Year (ABY) very seriously. Among other things it was to be my introduction to the Arkansas birding community, a means of establishing my birding bona fides. However, the specific goal of 300 birds was an afterthought. Doris Boyles mentioned the number in casual conversation and it stuck. It was a nice round number, easy to remember, and theoretically achievable, having been exceeded by Kenny and LaDonna Nichols in 2005.

What's the worst single thing about doing a Big Year? In my case it was being away from Pat and Skip much too much. I needed their support and they gave it, though Skip, our English Springer Spaniel, was a bit less understanding. Without them on my side, if not by my side, reaching 300 would have been the failure of a hollow victory. A downside to Big Years that I did not anticipate is that the moment you tic a bird, it becomes a trash bird, noise to be filtered out, ignored. Soon almost every bird you see is a trash bird, annoyingly taking precious time you need for finding good birds. What's the best thing about doing a Big Year? The birds, of course. And the birders.

My year-long enterprise was conducted in public, with as many posts to the ARBIRD listserv as bird species. My successes and failures alike were open to all. The highlights

were many: seeing the first state record Northern Shrike and the second state record Cave Swallow; having the sixth state record Calliope Hummingbird turn up at our backyard feeder; finding Ruff, Red Knot, Sabine's Gull, Prairie Falcon, Bewick's Wren and Cape May Warbler; adding Thayer's Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Sprague's Pipit, Smith's Longspur, and Red-cockaded Woodpecker to my year list; and standing next to a tree containing a juvenile Sharp-shinned Hawk and hearing Bill Shepherd remark, "That's the smallest goshawk I've ever seen." Missing the same Red-necked Phalarope twice was my most painful failure. That miss came at a crucial time, when it seemed that success or failure of a year-long effort might hang in the balance. So many people pulling for me. I had let them down. Even now it stings.

Stretching beyond everyday pursuits to take on challenges requiring significant physical and mental effort, and not a little pain and discomfort, is my way of learning new things about myself and about life. The Red-necked Phalarope episode was instructive. How would I react? Truth to tell, for a few days I simply went through the motions. I birded everyday, mechanically, out of habit. But soon I regained my momentum. The endorphin rush, the tingling on the back of my neck when in pursuit of the next target bird, returned.

Reaching my public goal ironically presented a new challenge, a challenge to my private goal. The temptation was to coast through the remaining month and a half of 2007, chasing whatever rare birds, if any, that others found. Instead, I told Pat that I needed her help. I had to push extra hard for the remaining few weeks. I needed her support more than ever at the end. She gave it, without reservation. And so I birded hard right up to the last day of the year, finished with 307 year-birds, and met the personal goal I had set for myself by answering this simple question. At age 60 could I still take on a year-long mentally and physically taxing challenge and never give up, never let up, always give my all? I was enormously gratified to answer that question in the affirmative at midnight December 31, 2007. I am still alive.

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## Color Permeates a Cold and Dreary Day

*By Craig Provost*

One intrepid visitor joined the Great Backyard Bird Count event sponsored by ASCA at Two Rivers Park on February 16th. Mr. Herb Rule joined Dan Scheiman, Samantha Holschbach, Karen Holliday, Doris Boyles, Jim and his 10 year old daughter Samantha Dixon, and Dale and myself on a pretty cold and wet venture for one hour. We were rewarded with some nice, colorful birds on our walk of about 0.6 miles:

Canada Goose 4, Red-shouldered Hawk 1, Purple Finch 2, Northern Mockingbird 1, Yellow-rumped Warbler 5, Blue Jay 2, Carolina Wren 2, Brown Thrasher 1, American Goldfinch 2, Mourning Dove 1, American Coot 2, Northern Cardinal 30, Eastern Bluebird 12, Ring-billed Gull 1, Pine Warbler 1, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1, Northern Flicker 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker 1, Song Sparrow 6, Swamp Sparrow 1, White-throated Sparrow 1, Fox Sparrow 2, Red-winged Blackbird 30, Eastern Meadowlark 1, European Starling 1.

Overall, a very nice outing with a nice variety of colorful birds for our inquiring birder, who has apparently known Bill Shepherd since 7<sup>th</sup> grade!

## *Upcoming Programs*

ASCA meets at 7:00 PM the second Thursday of each month at the John Gould Fletcher Library (except when noted), 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.

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### March 13, 2008 – Wild Utah

Guest Speaker: **Bob Brister**

Program: **Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness**

Mr. Brister, Interregional Outreach Coordinator for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, will give a 20-minute slideshow featuring images of the famous redrock country of Southern Utah followed by a brief update on Utah wilderness issues. His organization supports the America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, which would add over 9 million acres of spectacular federal lands in Utah to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

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### April 10, 2008 – Prescribed Burning

Guest Speaker: **Roger Fryar**

Program: **Ecology of Prescribed Burning**

Roger Fryar of the USDA Forest Service will discuss the ecology of prescribed fire, one of the most important wildlife habitat management tools we have, but also one that is often misunderstood by the public.

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### May 8, 2008 – Planning Meeting

There will not be a program at this meeting.

The Officers and Board members of ASCA will hold a special planning session to discuss strategies and future plans for ASCA. Please bring your "All Suggested Strategies" worksheet to the meeting.

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### May 10, 2008 – International Migratory Bird Day

Please join ASCA as we celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with a morning bird walk through **Allsopp and Murray Parks** in Little Rock, lunch at the **Whole Hog Café** on Cantrell Road, and an afternoon bird walk at **Terry Lock and Dam**.

This is a great time to visit, make new friends and share stories. For specific details please see **May 10<sup>th</sup> field trip to Allsopp and Murray Parks** on page 6.

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### Save the Date

June 12 – Delos McCauley will showcase bird photos from his various travels

July 10 – Graham Rich of Central Arkansas Water will talk about plans for Lake Maumelle and birder access to the lake

Sept 11 – Eric Sundell, well-respected botanist, will give a talk on milkweed biology

Oct 9 – Stan Senner, Audubon Alaska, AK conservation issues

## **Arkansas Audubon Society Spring Meeting**

MARK YOUR CALENDERS . . .

The Spring 2008 Conference of the Arkansas Audubon Society (AAS) will be held April 25-27 at the Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center (visit <http://www.rivervalleynaturecenter.com/> for details) in Ft. Smith. Meeting, programs and meals will take place at the nature center.

Special-rate lodging is available at the Comfort Inn for \$89.99 (call 479-484-0277), the Aspen for \$94.99 (call 479-452-9000), or the Hampton for \$99.00 (call 479-452-2000). Reserve rooms by 4 April for these special rates (be sure to mention you're with the Arkansas Audubon Society). All of these hotels are on the east side of Fort Smith and are located about a 5-10 minute drive from the nature center.

There's GREAT birdwatching at the nature center plus EXCELLENT birding hotspots within short driving distances.

Stay tuned for more details as field trip locations and speaker arrangements unfold!! If you have questions/comments, please contact Jason Luscier at [jluscie@uark.edu](mailto:jluscie@uark.edu) or (479) 871-9199. Also, visit the AAS website at <http://www.arbirds.org/>.

Jason D. Luscier, AAS Vice President



This 6<sup>th</sup> state record Calliope Hummingbird visited the Little Rock home of Dennis and Pat Braddy for several weeks beginning late November. Their dog Skip enjoyed all the attention and visitors this rare winter bird drew to their home.

Photo by Dennis Braddy

## Sightings from Around the State

December 21<sup>st</sup> – Dottie & Doris Boyles spotted a **Black-legged Kittiwake** flying around the dam site at Lake Conway.

December 23<sup>rd</sup> – Joe Neal, Mike Mlodinow, Dan Scheiman, and Dennis Braddy found an adult **Prairie Falcon** near Chesney Prairie NA.

December 24<sup>th</sup> – Craig & Dale Provost, and Dan Scheiman spotted an immature **Golden Eagle** at Holla Bend NWR.

December 25<sup>th</sup> – Craig & Dale Provost discovered 6 **Cackling Geese** by a warehouse on Faulkner Lake Road in Little Rock.

December 31<sup>st</sup> – Cameron Cox, of Oklahoma, found 3 **Common Ground-Doves** at Holla Bend.

January 6<sup>th</sup> – Dan Scheiman, Dottie & Doris Boyles, and David Ray found a **Bewick's Wren** near Carden Bottoms.

January 9<sup>th</sup> – Don Simons spotted a **Townsend's Solitaire** at Cameron Bluff on Mount Magazine.

January 11<sup>th</sup> – Bo Verser saw a **Brown Pelican** fly across I-40 just west of Russellville.

January 12<sup>th</sup> – Kenny & LaDonna Nichols discovered a **Thayer's Gull** loafing around the Russellville Jr. High School.

January 16<sup>th</sup> – Debby Haines reported that the **Anna's Hummingbird** she hosted last winter in her Little Rock yard had returned.

January 21<sup>st</sup> – Andy & Kathy Radomski discovered a **Rock Wren** on Pinnacle Mountain.

January 26<sup>th</sup> – Kenny and LaDonna Nichols found a **Glaucous Gull** at Lake Dardanelle near the Delaware Bay Recreation Area, along with a **Lesser Black-backed Gull**.

February 1<sup>st</sup> – Dick Baxter reported seeing 44 **Sandhill Cranes** in Birdsong on AR 308.

February 15<sup>th</sup> – While having his car worked on Bill Shepherd discovered a male and female **Great-tailed Grackle** in a Little Rock alley just off Broadway Street.

February 18<sup>th</sup> – Sherry Stansbery found a **Common Redpoll** visiting her feeders in Harrison.



A female Great-tailed Grackle waves to Little Rock birders. The birds were seen hanging out at Taco Bell, McDonald's, Wendy's and Rally's.

Robert Herron photo



## ASCA Field Trip Schedule

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 about birds from more experienced birders. Perhaps a chance to get a lifebird for those dedicated birders. Check out the web site at [www.ascabird.org](http://www.ascabird.org) for more information about upcoming field trips.

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*March 8, 2008*

### Warren Prairie Natural Area

We will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the south end of the commuter parking lot at I-630 and Shackelford Road in Little Rock. We will arrive at Warren Prairie around 9:45 a.m. at the parking lot/sign on Hwy 172 for those who rather meet us there. Our target species are wintering grassland birds, especially Henslow's Sparrows. We will drive gravel roads and periodically stop to walk through tall grass in search of birds. Waterproof boots are highly recommended. Warren Prairie is located east and south of Warren, AR on Hwy 172. Pack a lunch and plenty of water.

After lunch we will travel to the Moro Big Pine WMA to look for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and other pineland birds.

For more information contact Karen Holliday at [karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us](mailto:karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us)

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*April 12, 2008*

### Cook's Lake Conservation Education Center and White River NWR Visitor Center

We will meet at 7:00 a.m. at the south end of the commuter parking lot at I-630 and Shackelford Road in Little Rock. We will arrive at the Cook's Lake Education Center around 8:45 a.m. for those who would like to meet us there. Early spring migrants are our target birds. We will be walking through upland and bottomland hardwoods. Rubber boots are recommended. Pack a lunch and plenty of water.

Cook's Lake is located approximately 12 miles east of Stuttgart near Casscoe on Hwy 33 Spur (Cook's Lake Rd.)

Before returning to Little Rock, we will stop at the new White River NWR Visitor Center. The Visitor Center is located off Hwy.1 in St. Charles, AR. It is approximately a 25 minute drive from Cook's Lake

For more information contact Karen Holliday at [karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us](mailto:karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us)

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*May 10, 2008*

### International Migratory Bird Day Allsopp and Murray Parks, Terry Lock & Dam, Little Rock

We will be celebrating International Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> with a field trip to Allsopp and Murray Parks, and Terry Lock & Dam. Both parks have great habitat for spring migrants. We will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the lower entrance to Allsopp Park. To get there from west Little Rock, take Cantrell Road to Cedar Hill Road. Turn right at the traffic light, go about 1 block and turn right into the park. We will meet at the far end of the parking lot, closest to the trail. From Allsopp, we will travel to nearby Murray Park.

Afterwards, we will meet for lunch at the Whole Hog Cafe, located at 2516 Cantrell Road. For those who wish to continue birding after lunch, we will go on to Terry Lock & Dam. Our target bird there will be Painted Bunting.

All birders are welcome. For more information contact Karen Holliday at [karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us](mailto:karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us)



# Field Trip Reports

## Lonoke and Little Rock Christmas Bird Counts

December 2007

For the Lonoke CBC (Dec 16) 36 participants spent 73 hours and traveled 404 miles to tally 112 species and 128,269 individuals. This is probably a new Lonoke species record, beating the old record by 3 species! We logged high counts for 5 species including Ross's Goose (139), and recorded 2 unusual species: Cackling Goose (4, only the second time recorded) and American White Pelican (8, a first for the count).

For the Little Rock CBC (Dec 29) 27 participants spent 77.5 hours and traveled 357 miles to tally 106 species and 17,865 individuals. This is the first time that LR went over 100 species, beating the old record by 9 species! We logged high counts for six species

including Wild Turkey (9). Unusual species were Ross's Goose (2, only the second time recorded), Cackling Goose (7, a first for the count), and Merlin (1, another first).

Congratulations to those who helped make this year so successful. Special thanks go to Doris and Dottie Boyles for hosting the LR tally rally.

--Dan Scheiman CBC Compiler

*\*\*And a special thank you to Dan Scheiman for all his hard work and effort, organizing not only the many teams for both counts but compiling all the data as well. Great job Dan!*

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## Holla Bend NWR and Lake Dardanelle

January 19, 2008

Thirty-two birders met at Holla Bend NWR in hopes of finding a number of recently reported rarities. With so many people we thoroughly covered the area where the Common Ground-Doves had been but did not find them. However our numbers did help us flush many sparrows including several **Le Conte's**, and later a **Short-eared Owl** across from the observation tower. Two **Trumpeter Swans** flew up from the oxbow. Then we headed to Country Loop Rd. outside the refuge where we were unable to relocate the Bewick's Wren or a Harris's Sparrow, but we did get excellent looks at a mammal-carrying **Sharp-shinned Hawk** and two **Purple Finches**. Then it was off to the Lake Dardanelle Dam where, despite two rounds of back-and-forth between north and south sides, we did not find the Brown Pelican, Laughing Gull, or Rock Wren, though they were known to be somewhere in the area. Despite missing most of our target species, it was an exciting, fast-paced day of chasing rarities, several birders got life/state/year birds, and everyone had fun, so in the end it was surely a success! --Dan Scheiman

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## Stuttgart Airport

February 9, 2008

Twenty-six birders gathered at Stuttgart Airport (Important Bird Area). The weather was perfect and the birds cooperated; we saw most of our targets. Once again the **Smith's Longspurs** showed how easily they can hide in the short grass, even at close range, but we saw all the distinguishing field marks on birds in flight. We saw up to 55 individuals at a time, but we likely flushed more than that over the course of the day. Bill Holimon of Natural Heritage Commission, who studied Smith's across the state, taught us about their habitat

ecology. Up to a dozen **Short-eared Owls** obligingly flew around for us, though some were scolded by a Northern Harrier for being up at the wrong hour. A lovely **Le Conte's Sparrow** gave us great looks as it sat in a saltbush, whereas a sneaky **Sedge Wren** flew among us but never perched up. Despite being rarely reported this season, a few of us lucked upon a single **Sprague's Pipit** in the same spot where it has been seen in the past. Another fantastic field trip! - Dan Scheiman

**Audubon Society of Central Arkansas**

300 S. Rodney Parham Road, Suite 10  
Little Rock, AR 72205

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This Black-legged Kittiwake was observed at the Lake Conway dam site on Dec. 21, 2007 and last seen on Jan. 2, 2008. It was a lifebird for at least 27 birders.

Photo by Jim Dixon

**Audubon Society of Central Arkansas**  
Chapter Only Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Level:	Student/Senior	\$10 per year
(Check One)	Regular	\$15 per year
	Family	\$25 per year
	Supporting	\$35 per year
	Patron	\$50 per year

Make check payable to "ASCA" and mail to treasurer Barry Haas, 804 Konrad Ct., Little Rock, AR 72223-9201. Please note that "Chapter Only Members" will not receive *Audubon* magazine. To receive *Audubon* magazine, you need to join the National Audubon Society (NAS).

Changes in address should be sent to the following. If a chapter only member, notify Jetletter at 300 S. Rodney Parham, Suite #10, Little Rock, AR 72205. If a NAS member, notify both Jetletter and the NAS at P. O. Box 51001, Boulder CO, 80322-1001

*The Snipe* is published quarterly by the Audubon Society of Central Arkansas. Our mission is to encourage programs and activities supporting all things natural, wild, and free, especially birds, bird habitat stability and improvement, as well as to promote fellowship among members, educate and inspire the public, and champion the highest standards of ethical outdoor conduct.

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**Whom to Contact  
if you Find an Injured Bird**

For a listing of an AR Game & Fish Commission authorized Migratory Bird Rehabilitator in your area, you can visit their website at:

<http://www.agfc.com/wildlife-conservation/rehabilitators.aspx>  
or  
[http://www.agfc.com/pdfs/rehab/migratorybird\\_rehablist.pdf](http://www.agfc.com/pdfs/rehab/migratorybird_rehablist.pdf)

**\*\*\*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. It is the only white page listing with the last name Audubon.