

# THE SNIPE

*The Newsletter of the  
Audubon Society of Central Arkansas*



Charles Mills

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## Across State Lines

*by Rodney Paul  
Raptor Rehabilitator*

When it comes to raptor rehabilitation many rehabbers unfortunately end up with raptors that are non-releasable due to their injuries. Often times, these birds make good candidates to use as educational ambassadors to help educate the public.

Since many rehabilitators also hold education permits, this allows them to keep raptors to use as an educational tool. More than likely, many people have not, or will not be able to view and learn about these magnificent birds "up close and personal" unless they get to see a presentation.

While we would like to add every bird to our education permit, it is not always possible due to situations such as housing constraints. It is possible to 'adopt' a bird out to someone else's education or display permit. This also allows the bird to have a full life in captivity as opposed to euthanasia.

We all know that birds fly across state lines and even country borders during certain times of the year. However, transporting a raptor across state lines is different.

The recipient has to have prior approval from their federal permit office to accept the bird and prove they have adequate housing. In some situations approval between two different federal offices is needed, one to send and one to receive the bird, and in some states the game and fish office might also require approval. You are also required by some states, to provide a health certificate indicating the bird is free from any health concerns. This document typically is good for ten days so a lot has to happen before the actual transfer occurs. Airline reservations have to be made or ground transport schedules have to be arranged.

We were able to transport, via airlines, a Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk to Wind Over Wings in Clinton, CT the first part of September. WOW is an educational facility that does rehabilitation and is heavily involved with raptor education. This hawk will live out her natural life as a valued educational tool with them.

We were also successful in placing a Black Vulture with Land Between The Lakes Nature Center at Golden Pond, Kentucky the very next week. She was transported by vehicle.



This female Black Vulture found a new home in Kentucky  
Photo by Rodney Paul

Last October, we had an imprinted Great Horned Owl that was flown to Idaho to be used in falconry. This owl will be returned to us and used as an educational ambassador after her mission is accomplished as a falconry bird.

While we would rather keep our raptors here, it is sometimes necessary to transfer them across state lines, fulfill a purpose as an educational ambassador and live out a full life, albeit in captivity.

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# PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

## BILL SHEPHERD

As my term as president of ASCA comes to a close, my thoughts turn to something we have *not* accomplished in 2007-2008. While there are several shortfalls I could address, I'm going to restrict myself to a subject that I consider very important, something that—as far as I can recall—we haven't even discussed. And that's the chapter's records or archives.

We have made quite a few collective decisions in these two years, all of them duly recorded by our conscientious recording secretary, Susan Hardin. Will those decisions be readily available for consultation next year? Or will we prefer to start over from scratch next year, like a goose on a spring morning?

I submit that the chapter needs to designate a permanent repository for its minutes and make sure that they get deposited there every year. Copies of the chapter's annual reports also should be retained for reference. Perhaps our monthly agendas as well? Well, maybe not; but keeping them deserves consideration at least. Should we archive copies of our letters to public

officials? Considerable thought and effort went into preparing some of these. And, of course, we should archive *The Snipe*.

Recently I read Ken Dayer's history of the Pulaski County Audubon Society/ASCA through the close of the twentieth century. As I did so, I couldn't help wondering whether anyone would ever write a history of ASCA in the twenty-first century. If someone did, where would he get his source material? He certainly wouldn't find much in the newspapers.

By the way, I recommend to all of you that you consider reading Ken Dayer's thesis.

Finally, I ask everyone to reflect on the thought that we have been making history together. History didn't come to a halt eight years ago. We may choose to let our work blow away like fallen leaves in a high wind or we may keep a permanent record of what we've done. But, however minor our role, we have been making history and scripting the future.

--Bill Shepherd

## ASCA's Christmas Potluck & Silent Auction

Come join us on Thursday, December 11 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at Magnolia Lodge for our annual Christmas Potluck and Silent Auction. This fun event is a great opportunity to enjoy some wonderful food, spread some holiday cheer, and exchange stories with fellow birders. Our guest speaker will be Greg Butts, State Parks Director for the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism. Greg will be presenting a program on the history and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Arkansas State Parks.

Our Silent Auction is a critical source of funds for ASCA. Auction items can be purchased or hand made. Please let me know no later than, Monday, December 8 what item(s) you are donating. You can email me at [ctboyles@aristotle.net](mailto:ctboyles@aristotle.net) or call 501-224-0302. If you are bringing an item, please be there before 6 p.m. so we can get your item labeled and in place. We will begin accepting bids by 6:15 and will sit down for dinner around 6:30. ASCA will provide the drinks, plates, cups and eating utensils.

Magnolia Lodge is located at 5304 West Markham Street in Little Rock, about a block and half west of Fair Park Blvd. and Markham Street. For directions to the lodge see page 5 under Upcoming Programs.

Bring your favorite dish and come join us for lots of fun on December 11.

--Dottie Boyles - Silent Auction Chairman

# *Conservation News*

*Barry Haas*

## **Dark Hollow in North Little Rock**

A Bass Pro sporting goods store along with other retail outlets proposed for the Dark Hollow wetlands area of North Little Rock suffered a severe setback recently. Federal judge Bill Wilson ruled that the Corps of Engineers had “arbitrarily and capriciously” issued a permit to clear and develop these wetlands.

Audubon Society of Central Arkansas was a plaintiff in the original Dark Hollow lawsuit, but federal judge George Howard dismissed that case saying that ASCA and other plaintiffs had no legal standing and could not show they would suffer harm if the project were allowed to go forward. Several individuals who live near Dark Hollow refiled essentially the same lawsuit that was ruled on by Judge Wilson in early November.

So what does all this mean? The Corps had allowed the developer to do an Environmental Assessment, and the Environmental Assessment indicated little or no harm

would come from the development. But Judge Wilson’s ruling requires an Environment Impact Study, a much more detailed analysis of potential environmental damage, instead of the more cursory Environmental Assessment. Part of this Study would be a review of alternate sites that would be less environmentally damaging. In addition, the Study would include some \$8 million in road improvements that would be required to make the Dark Hollow site more accessible, but were not included in the earlier Environmental Assessment.

The developer of Bass Pro and the other retail stores has indicated they plan to appeal Judge Wilson’s ruling. Given how sensitive Dark Hollow is, we can only hope the developer will decide to build this development elsewhere in a less environmentally sensitive area. One option is in the Otter Creek area of Little Rock where property suitable for such a development is available.

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## **Hempstead County Coal-fired Power Plant**

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) issued an air permit in early November for a coal-fired power plant in Hempstead County that has seen strong opposition from the environmental community. The coal plant would add huge amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> to our air. It would be located near one of the state’s best wetland areas that is home to not only scores of bird species but also a rich variety of other wildlife.

In 2007 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that CO<sub>2</sub> could be regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a pollutant, but the Bush administration has not yet adopted any regulations re CO<sub>2</sub>. It is expected that the Obama administration in 2009 will take on the task of drafting and adopting CO<sub>2</sub> regulations that will affect an estimated 100 coal-fired power plants in various development stages across the U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> is one of the chief ingredients of greenhouse gas which is causing global warming.

The air permit issued by ADEQ will be appealed first to the administrative law judge within the department, then before the Arkansas Pollution Control & Ecology Commission and finally in circuit court. It will likely take some time before the air permit clears every challenge and also the EPA adopts new regulations affecting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

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## **Update on Lake Maumelle**

A recent meeting hosted by Central Arkansas Water included officials from Pulaski County, City of Little Rock, North Little Rock and other interested parties. The subject was how best to protect the Lake Maumelle watershed from increasing development threats.

Citizens Protecting Maumelle Watershed has been talking to those elected officials in support of the community developed Watershed Management Plan that cost over \$1.3 million and would adequately protect our primary drinking water supply. Certain elected officials have been reluctant to implement the protections in the Plan which would limit housing density by requiring large lots (5 acres or more), ban direct discharge of

wastewater (sewage) into our drinking water supply and set other restrictions to reduce potential pollutants that would enter Lake Maumelle as more houses are built in the watershed.

Pulaski Co. Judge Floyd Villines in particular has been opposed to putting into place on the county level the needed protections.

It is up to all of us to express our strong support for the protections in the Watershed Management Plan so our drinking water will remain high quality and at an affordable price.

# A Disappearing Arkansas Songbird Needs Your Help

## How to Join the Arkansas Wren Survey

Dan Scheiman, Ph.D.

The once-common Bewick's Wren (pronounced Buick, like the car) is now extremely rare east of the Mississippi River. It is a species of high conservation concern in the state and throughout much of its range. In the early twentieth century, Bewick's Wrens were fairly common permanent residents in rural regions of Arkansas. Since the 1980s it has become rare and infrequently reported. Habitat loss is thought to be a major factor in this decline; competition with House Wrens and other birds for nest sites might also play a role.

### *Become a Citizen Scientist!*

Citizen scientists have been making meaningful contributions to conservation for decades by participating in such bird monitoring programs as the Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, and Project FeederWatch. Now, Arkansans have an opportunity to participate in a special study aimed specifically at helping a declining Arkansas bird. This project is funded by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's State Wildlife Grant and conducted by Audubon Arkansas and Arkansas State University's Department of Biological Sciences.

The Arkansas Wren Survey will determine the distribution, abundance, and habitat affinities of Bewick's Wrens across the state. By learning where Bewick's Wrens live and which habitats they prefer we can make informed decisions about how to best manage for the species.

Join the survey team! It's free, easy, fun, and open to **anyone of any experience level** who can spend about 4 hours at least twice a year looking and listening for wrens in their habitat.

Here's what you do:

- Sign up at <http://ar.audubon.org/wren>
- Find suitable Bewick's Wren habitat using maps and local knowledge
- Following simple survey protocol, count the wrens you see and hear
- Record a few basic habitat features
- Submit your data
- Share your questions and sightings with other participants using the ARWREN e-mail list

Survey participants will receive:

- Access to all online materials necessary to complete the project.
- A CD with wren songs and calls for playback in the field
- Subscription to ARWREN, a private e-mail discussion group.



Bewick's Wren  
Photo by Charles Mills

### *Bewick's Wren Habitat*

Bewick's Wrens prefer brushy or weedy areas in open country, and openings and edges of woodlands. Farmyards and abandoned farmsteads with unkempt fencerows, brushpiles, junkpiles, and dilapidated outbuildings are all places that provide nooks for nests. These habitat features have been lost through natural succession and changing farming practices.

### *Other Wrens*

While surveying for Bewick's Wrens, participants will also count Carolina and House Wrens. These wrens are much more common than Bewick's Wren and look similar. The Carolina Wren in particular closely resembles the Bewick's Wren, but the Carolina Wren is an abundant permanent resident in a variety of open habitats, including backyards, throughout the state. See the project's web site and consult a field guide to learn how to distinguish these wren species.

To learn more and to sign up to help, visit the Arkansas Wren Survey web site at <http://ar.audubon.org/wren> or contact Dr. Dan Scheiman, Director of Bird Conservation at [dscheiman@audubon.org](mailto:dscheiman@audubon.org).

## **Upcoming Programs**

The ASCA meets at 7:00 PM the second Thursday of each month at the John Gould Fletcher Library (except where 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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### **December 11, 2008 – Holiday Potluck and Silent Auction**

Guest Speaker: **Greg Butts, State Parks Director**  
Program: **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Arkansas State Parks**

Join us on Thursday, December 11 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm at Magnolia Lodge for our annual Holiday Potluck and Silent Auction. Our guest speaker will be Greg Butts, State Parks Director for the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism. Greg will be presenting an informative program on the history and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Arkansas State Parks.

We will have our annual Potluck and Silent Auction that evening as well. Our Silent Auction is not only fun but also a critical source of funds for ASCA. Auction items may be purchased or hand made. See page 2 for details.

Bring your favorite dish and come join us on Dec. 11 at 6 p.m.

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

Take I-630, then 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.

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### **January 8, 2009 – Annual Business Meeting**

The Audubon Society of Central Arkansas will hold its annual Business Meeting on Jan. 8 at 7:00 pm. All ASCA members are encouraged to attend. This meeting will be held at the John Gould Fletcher Library located at 823 Buchanan Street.

ASCA can only exist with active members and this is your opportunity to provide input into our activities for 2009.

There will not be a program or guest speaker at this meeting.

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### **February 12, 2009 – Wild Birds Unlimited**

Guest Speaker: **Jim Allen**  
Program: **Backyard Bird Equipment**

Jim Allen, of Wild Birds Unlimited, will discuss the four basic needs of birds - food, water, housing, and raising young. His talk will also include the basics of bringing birds to your yard and enjoying them, and optics available to birdwatchers.

## **ASCA Slate of Officers 2009 - 2010**

We will be electing new Officers and Board Members for the coming year on December 11.

The Nominating Committee included Dale Provost, Susan Hardin, and retiring president Bill Shepherd, who served as its chair. At the November 13 meeting, Bill presented a slate of nominees, as follows:

For one-year terms as directors:

1. Doris Boyles (continuing)
2. D. DeLynn Hearn (continuing)
3. Bill Saunders (continuing)
4. Bill Hailey (continuing)
5. Jane Gulley
6. Bill Shepherd

For two-year terms as officers:

Field Trip Coordinator – Karen Holliday  
Webmaster – Dr. J. Lyndal York  
Rare Bird Alert – D. DeLynn Hearn  
Hospitality – Doris Boyles  
Conservation – Barry Haas  
Christmas Bird Count Compiler  
– Dr. Dan Scheiman  
Newsletter Editor – Dottie Boyles  
Treasurer – Ed Laster  
Recording Secretary –  
Vice President – Dr. Dan Scheiman  
President – Rob Weiss

Any member may make nominations from the floor at the December meeting, before the election is held. Please note that a recording secretary is essential to the chapter and no one has been identified to assume that responsibility.

Bill Shepherd  
Nominating Committee Chair

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### **Best Wishes to Bill Hailey**

The ASCA Officers and Board members extend get-well wishes to Bill Hailey who is recovering from surgery.

Bill, everyone at ASCA wishes you a very speedy recovery!

## Lonoke and Little Rock Christmas Bird Counts

The days are getting shorter and the weather is getting colder, but that doesn't mean the birding has to slow down! It is Christmas Bird Count season again.

The CBC is an Audubon citizen science program and the nation's longest running bird survey – this is the 109<sup>th</sup> year. On count day participants count all birds they encounter within their assigned section of a 15-mile diameter circle. Birders of any skill level are welcome. It's a great opportunity to learn from experienced birders! You can bird for as long as you like.

ASCA sponsors two counts, Lonoke on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, and Little Rock on Saturday, December 27<sup>th</sup>. Contact Dan Scheiman at [birddan@comcast.net](mailto:birddan@comcast.net) or 501-244-2229 if you would like to join one or both.

There are 15 other counts across the state. Contact Leif Anderson at [leanderson@fs.fed.us](mailto:leanderson@fs.fed.us) or 479-284-3150 for more information. Hope to see you out there!

*Dan Scheiman*  
*Christmas Bird Count Compiler*

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### Great Backyard Bird Count

Mark your calendars for the Great Backyard Bird Count, February 13-16, 2009. The GBBC is a joint effort of National Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning birders to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Participants count birds anywhere for as little or as long as they wish during the four-day period. They tally the highest number of birds of each species seen together at any one time. To report their counts, they fill out an online checklist at the Great Backyard Bird Count web site. Participants may also send in photographs of the birds they see.

The National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are calling on everyone to "Count for Fun, Count for the Future!"

Participants did just that in record numbers for the 2008 count, submitting more than 85,000 checklists and identifying 635 species. For more information visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>.

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### Project FeederWatch Begins

The 2008-09 season of **Project FeederWatch** began Saturday, November 8. You can sign up at any time. FeederWatchers keep track of their birds through the winter and report their tallies each week.

Watching birds benefits science, but it can also be a healthy part of your routine. Hundreds of studies have verified that time spent watching nature can reduce stress. So why not slow down and watch the birds?

Visit the [PFW web site](http://www.ProjectFeederWatch.org) to learn more and to sign up. New participants receive a kit with a handbook, a bird-identification poster, calendar, and instruction booklet. There is a \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members).

### Homeschooler's Guide to Project FeederWatch

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has just released its newly revised, FREE *Homeschooler's Guide to Project FeederWatch*.

For more than 20 years, Project FeederWatch has been an easy, fun way for children to learn about birds and strengthen their skills in writing, research, observation, identification, creativity, and more. FeederWatchers keep track of the numbers and kinds of birds seen at their feeders through the winter and report what they see to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

The *Guide* will lead you through bird-related activities that promote learning across many disciplines, including science, math, history, and the arts.

To download the *Homeschooler's Guide to Project FeederWatch*, visit [www.FeederWatch.org](http://www.FeederWatch.org) and click on the Education/Home School button. You'll be able to download the PDF in low or high resolutions.

## 109<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count

It's finally starting to look like winter and time to think about the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC). This is the 109th year in the CBC database, making it the longest running bird science project in North America. Over 2000 counts are conducted across the Americas during the period from December 14 through January 5.

What's involved: Each 15-mile diameter count circle has a compiler. The circle is broken into sections with a group of volunteers for each. Each group then tries to find all the birds in their area, within a calendar day. You count birds you actually find, not birds that should be there.

Skill and time levels: It doesn't matter about your birding skill level. What's important is the willingness to help citizen science. Many times a compiler will put several people together to balance the skill levels.

The amount of time you spend is also flexible. Some watch their bird feeder for an hour, while others go for 15+ hours out in the field.

There is a \$5 fee, but it's free for feeder watchers and anyone under the age of 18. Some counts are sponsored, therefore there are no fees.

Cheers,  
*Leif Anderson*

| <u>Count</u>                            | <u>Date</u> | <u>Compiler</u> | <u>Closest town</u> | <u>E-mail</u>                                                            | <u>Phone</u> |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Arkadelphia                             | Sun 14      | Charles Mills   | Arkadelphia         | <a href="mailto:swamp_fox@mac.com">swamp_fox@mac.com</a>                 |              |
| Fayetteville                            | Sun 14      | Joe Neal        | Fayetteville        | <a href="mailto:joeneal@uark.edu">joeneal@uark.edu</a>                   | 479-521-1858 |
| Lonoke                                  | Sun 14      | Dan Scheiman    | Little Rock         | <a href="mailto:birddan@comcast.net">birddan@comcast.net</a>             | 501-244-2229 |
| Hot Springs Village                     | Mon 15      | Lynn Sackett    | Hot Springs Vlg.    | <a href="mailto:tlsackett@sbcglobal.net">tlsackett@sbcglobal.net</a>     | 501-922-9060 |
| Mountain Home                           | Mon 15      | Phillip Hyatt   | Mountain Home       |                                                                          |              |
| N. Fork Illinois Bayou                  | Mon 15      | Dwayne Rambo    | Hector              | <a href="mailto:drambo@fs.fed.us">drambo@fs.fed.us</a>                   | 479-284-3150 |
| Crooked Creek                           | Wed 17      | Sally Jo Gibson | Harrison            | <a href="mailto:sjogibson@alltel.net">sjogibson@alltel.net</a>           | 870-741-5805 |
| Holla Bend NWR                          | Thur 18     | Leif Anderson   | Dardanelle          | <a href="mailto:Leanderson@fs.fed.us">Leanderson@fs.fed.us</a>           | 479-284-3402 |
| Conway                                  | Sat 20      | Martha Johnson  | Conway              | <a href="mailto:amjohnson@conwaycorp.net">amjohnson@conwaycorp.net</a>   | 501-329-5214 |
| Fort Smith                              | Sat 20      | Bill Beall      | Fort Smith          | <a href="mailto:billtoka@mynewroads.com">billtoka@mynewroads.com</a>     |              |
| Bayou DeView                            | Mon 22      | Steve Osborne   | Brinkley            | <a href="mailto:jsteveosborne@gmail.com">jsteveosborne@gmail.com</a>     | 479-970-8429 |
| Pine Bluff                              | Mon 22      | Rob Doster      | Pine Bluff          | <a href="mailto:calcarius@comcast.net">calcarius@comcast.net</a>         | 505-323-3660 |
| Little Rock                             | Sat 27      | Dan Scheiman    | Little Rock         | <a href="mailto:birddan@comcast.net">birddan@comcast.net</a>             | 501-244-2229 |
| White River NWR                         | Mon 29      | Keith Sutton    | St. Charles         | <a href="mailto:catfishdude@sbcglobal.net">catfishdude@sbcglobal.net</a> | 501-847-9643 |
| Lake Georgia Pacific/<br>Felsenthal NWR | Mon-Jan 5   | Leif Anderson   | Crossett            | <a href="mailto:Leanderson@fs.fed.us">Leanderson@fs.fed.us</a>           | 479-284-3402 |

### Lonoke Bird Count Photo Chosen as CBC Banner



Congratulations to Kelly Chitwood of Camden. Her photo "Snow Geese in sunrise" was chosen as this year's banner for CBC e-mails. A portion of her photo also appears on the CBC homepage. Kelly took the photo of Dottie Boyles and Ken Dayer during last year's Lonoke

Christmas Bird Count. The flock of Snow Geese behind them numbered in the thousands.

Kelly said "That was one of the most fantastic naturalist experiences I've ever had: The enormity of the flock, the incessant calls, the surreal sunrise and a great group of people. I'm grateful for the entire experience including the wind-burned faces. Hours later, when I lay in bed, I could still hear the calls in my mind from that massive flock of geese. Awesome." You can check out Kelly's photo and others taken during last year's CBC at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>.

## Audubon Arkansas breaks ground on new Center

After years of planning, Audubon Arkansas finally held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Little Rock Audubon Center on November 14. Mayor Mark Stodola, Congressman Vic Snyder, and Senator Mark Pryor praised Audubon's vision before a crowd of 100 friends and supporters.

Construction began a few weeks earlier and is expected to be finished within a year. When complete, the Center will serve as office space for Audubon Arkansas, meeting space for the community, and most importantly a portal through which Arkansans will gain an understanding and appreciation of nature.

### Hurricane Birds

When the eye of Hurricane Gustav broke up around Millwood Lake in early September birders from around the state hit the roads and lakes in search of adventure. For those brave enough to face the wind and rain they were not disappointed. Reports began pouring in from various locations around the state. Here are just a few of the species reported from the fall out.

Black Skimmer – Millwood Lake  
Cave Swallow – Millwood Lake  
Laughing Gull – Millwood Lake  
Magnificent Frigatebird – Grand Lake,  
White Oak Lake, Millwood Lake  
Parasitic Jaeger – Millwood Lake  
Pomarine Jaeger – Millwood Lake  
Royal Tern – Centerton  
Sabine's Gull – Lake Dardanelle  
Sooty Tern – Lake Chicot, Millwood Lake,  
Lake Dardanelle, Beaver Lake

Hurricane Ike proved to not be quite as fruitful as Gustav but produced some interesting species nonetheless.

Little Gull – Lake Dardanelle  
Royal Tern – Millwood Lake

Thanks to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike several birders from around the state were able to add birds to their state and life lists.



## 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 life bird for those dedicated birders. Check out the web site at [www.ascabird.org](http://www.ascabird.org) for more information about upcoming field trips or contact Karen Holliday at [karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us](mailto:karenh@arkleg.state.ar.us).

December 2008

### Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Count

All are welcome to participate in the annual Lonoke and Little Rock Christmas Bird Counts. The Lonoke Count will be held on Sunday, December 14 and the Little Rock Count will be held on Saturday, December 27. For more information see page 4.

To participate in a count, contact Dan Scheiman at [birddan@comcast.net](mailto:birddan@comcast.net) or (501) 244-2229.

January 17, 2009

### Stuttgart Airport

Lapland and Smith's Longspurs, Short-eared Owls, and sparrows will be our target birds. 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 and carpool to the Stuttgart Airport. Dress in layers; be prepared for wind and very cold temperatures. Bring knee-high boots for walking through tall grass. We will eat lunch at the Little Chef restaurant in Stuttgart.

January 31, 2009

### Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge

Our target birds will be Bald Eagles, waterfowl, Short-eared Owls, and sparrows. Carpoolers should meet in the northwest corner of the Wal-Mart Super Center located on the corner of Chenal Parkway and Hwy 10 at 7:30 a.m. Bring a lunch and plenty of water. Most birding will be roadside, but bring knee-high boots if you want to flush sparrows and owls from the grass. We should arrive at the refuge headquarters around 9:30 a.m. for those who wish to meet us there.

February 14, 2009

### Two Rivers Park and Lake Maumelle

In conjunction with the Great Backyard Bird Count held Feb. 13-16. We will meet at Two Rivers Park at 8:00 a.m. The Park has a diverse population of sparrows, which provides a great opportunity to work on identifying those "little brown birds". Due to sandburs, knee-high rubber boots are highly recommended for walking in the fields. Members may wish to continue birding at Lake Maumelle after finishing at the park. Loons, mergansers, ducks, and grebes are easily found on the lake this time of the year. Bring your scope.

Directions--take Hwy 10 West to the stoplight at Pinnacle Valley Road, just past the Kroger Store. Look for the brown sign for Maumelle Park. Turn right at the light. Follow the road approximately 4 miles. Do not turn at Maumelle Park. Stay on County Farm Road. Bear right through the gates into Two Rivers Park. Go approximately ¾ of a mile to the first parking lot on your right that has a Porta-Potty.



# Field Trip Reports

## Millwood Lake

September 13, 2008

Although we were originally schedule to bird Village Creek State Park for migrant songbirds, we opted instead to head to Millwood Lake in hopes of seeing seabirds blown in by hurricane-turned tropical storm Ike. Ten birders gathered at Beard's Bluff overlook, ready for rain. Fortunately or unfortunately, Ike didn't arrive until after we packed it up around 2:30. We saw the usual assortment of waterbirds including **Black Terns**, **Forster's Terns**, **American White Pelicans**, a few **Anhingas**, a **Bald Eagle**, and an **Osprey**. The highlight was an unexpected find. An apparent female **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** was among the mass of (at least) 40 **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** swarming like bees around the feeder at the campground check-in station. Jim Dixon and Hazel McCauley first glimpsed it, later we all saw it. Delos McCauley took very nice photos. We logged 26 species for the day. --Dan Scheiman

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## Bell Slough WMA and Two Rivers Park

October 18, 2008

Sixteen birders entered Bell Slough WMA from the Spillway on Dam Rd. We didn't see a single Neotropical migrant but winter birds were evident. We saw 32 species including **Ruddy Duck** (4), **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (1), **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** (7), **Song Sparrow** (1), **White-throated Sparrow** (11), and a **White-crowned Sparrow** (found by Dottie Boyles).

When we felt satisfied that we had seen all that Bell Slough had to offer that morning we decided to try looking for Clay-colored Sparrow and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Two Rivers Park. No luck on the Clay-colored and Sharp-tailed but we did find oodles of

sharp sandburs! In between picking those off our pants we glimpsed 23 species including **Golden-crowned Kinglet** (1), **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** (2), **Yellow-rumped Warbler** (1), **Vesper Sparrow** (1), **Eastern Wood-Pewee** (1), and an **Anhinga** (spotted by Karen Holliday). We tried to coax a Virginia Rail out of hiding at the spot where the Provosts last saw a pair but there was no response to playback.

Besides the First-of-Season species, the highlight of the trip was four First-Timers who joined us on a bird walk for the first time. We enjoyed your company. Please join us again! --Dan Scheiman

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## Andrew Hulsey Fish Hatchery and Arkadelphia Oxidation Ponds

November 8, 2008

Seventeen people participated in our November field trip. Our first stop was the Fish Hatchery south of Hot Springs. It was quite cool and windy, but sunny. Our first sighting was 80 **American Wigeons**. Lots of **Black** and **Turkey Vultures** dotted the hatchery levees and swirled in the wind. A **Bewick's Wren** popped in and out of a tangle of vines giving several people their state, year, or life bird.

A **Common Loon** and a **Horned Grebe** were spotted on Lake Hamilton, which borders the hatchery. At the fishing pier, David Ray interrupted our lunch by flushing a **Wilson's Snipe**. Scopes and binoculars were substituted for sandwiches as we enjoyed great views of the snipe after he settled down beside a log in full view for several minutes.

A beautiful drive down Hwy 7 through the hills and trees in bright fall foliage took us to the Arkadelphia Oxidation Ponds. Shortly after arriving, David Ray flushed two **Wilson's Snipes** out of the yellow flowers floating in the back pond. A nearby Nutria was munching happily in the duckweed. Kelly Chitwood spotted an adult **Bald Eagle**. A gull, behaving like an overgrown Killdeer, darted back and forth through the grass on the levee. A review of Kelly's photos confirmed it to be a **Franklin's Gull**. There was no sign of the resident alligator.

Many thanks to Barry Haas for leading the field trip despite the dreadful cold. We tallied 33 species at the hatchery and 41 species at the oxidation ponds. An excellent day was had by all! --Karen Holliday

**Audubon Society of Central Arkansas**

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A Black Skimmer blown in with Hurricane Gustav was photographed by Charles Mills at Millwood Lake

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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>  
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[http://www.agfc.com/pdfs/rehab/migratorybird\\_rehablist.pdf](http://www.agfc.com/pdfs/rehab/migratorybird_rehablist.pdf)

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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.