

# THE SNIPE

*The Newsletter of the  
Audubon Society of Central Arkansas*



Photo by Charles Mills

## **What's Inside**

President's Column	Page 2	Grand Prairie Birding	Page 5
Conservation News	Page 3	Recent Bird Sightings	Page 6
AAS Spring Meeting	Page 4	Upcoming Field Trips	Page 6
Upcoming Programs	Page 5	Field Trip Reports	Page 7

Volume 41 Issue 2

[www.ascabird.org](http://www.ascabird.org)

March - May 2007

## **Ozark National Forest and SWEPCO Eagle Watch Area Recognized As Important Bird Areas**

*Dan Scheiman, Ph.D.*

*Bird Conservation Director, Audubon Arkansas*

On January 31<sup>st</sup> the Important Bird Areas Technical Committee recognized Ozark National Forest and Flint Creek Power Plant (a.k.a. SWEPCO Eagle Watch Area) as the state's 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Important Bird Areas (IBAs). They join the more than 75,000 IBAs worldwide and over 1,800 in the US. Audubon Arkansas manages the IBA program in the state. A site can be recognized if it consistently supports a significant population of a bird species of conservation concern or groups of species that congregate in large numbers such as wintering waterfowl, migrating shorebirds, or breeding wading birds.

Flint Creek Power Plant is located outside Gentry in Benton County. Warm water discharge from the plant keeps the cooling lake ice-free and attracts large numbers of wintering Bald Eagles and various waterbirds. An even larger number of bird watchers visit the site. In 1999, Southwestern Electric Power Company's (SWEPCO) environmental stewardship program funded a nature trail and pavilion at the area where the eagles congregate. Since then the Eagle Watch Area has attracted an estimated 10,000 visitors. School groups, 4-H, Scouts and others have offered their services, including monitoring nest boxes and building a butterfly garden. Thanks goes to Terry Stanfill, Senior

Chemist and birder, for filling out the nomination form and spearheading development of the Eagle Watch Area.

Its size and diversity of habitats makes the main division of Ozark National Forest one of the most important places for forest breeding birds not only in the state but also in the South-central region. A variety of birds of conservation concern including Sharp-shinned Hawk, Acadian Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Cerulean Warbler, and Worm-eating Warbler are so successful at breeding that their offspring disperse and colonize other areas in the region where populations are not self-sustaining. In addition, the forest hosts more than 1% of the state's population of many birds, both rare and common. In 2005, the Forest Service completed their forest management plan. The plan emphasizes restoration of early successional habitats through periodic disturbances like prescribed burns. This will create more habitat for other birds of conservation concern such as Northern Bobwhite, Bachman's Sparrow, and Painted Bunting. I thank Ralph Odegard and Steve Duzan of the Forest Service for submitting the nomination and for their dedication to bird conservation.

For more information about Arkansas' IBA program visit <http://www.ar.audubon.org/BirdSci.html>.

## **NEW WEBSITE HELPS BIRDERS IDENTIFY ARKANSAS BIRDS**

Audubon Arkansas and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission have developed a web site that allows users to see, hear, and identify 100 birds commonly found in Arkansas. The URL is [www.birdsofarkansas.org](http://www.birdsofarkansas.org). This is the first web site devoted exclusively to identifying Arkansas's birds. A species' color, size, voice, habitat preferences, and season found in the state are provided along with a description of the bird and an interesting fact. To help beginners find a bird they saw outside, the list of birds can be sorted by season, color, habitat or size. The site also lists additional web sites and books where browsers can find more information about Arkansas's birds and bird watching. This site was made possible by State Wildlife Grant Program funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

# 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  
[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)

Sherry Phillips  
501-228-5245

Drew Phillips  
501-228-5245  
[drewmilp@yahoo.com](mailto:drewmilp@yahoo.com)

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:

Sherry Phillips  
501-228-5245

### Rare Bird Alert:

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

### ASCA Webmaster:

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

### Field Trip Coordinator:

Open

I thank the members of ASCA who, at last month's business meeting elected me for a term as chapter president. It is an honor to hold that office, especially to assume it immediately following three-term president Drew Phillips. Such a dedicated guy! His personal commitment to this organization is my inspiration, and I'll try not to let you down.

It almost goes without saying that ASCA is well off financially but struggling in terms of the number of people currently involved. Our best hope, I believe, is to build on our strengths. And I think we need a dialogue about what our strengths are. So I invite all of you to take part in such a discussion.

Please, every one of you, write to me soon and give me, in a prioritized fashion, your views concerning the best things ASCA has going for it. Let me know what ASCA means to you. I'll compile the responses and we'll talk about them at a meeting this spring.

I'll begin the process by telling you what ASCA

means to me. In 1954—give or take a year—I attended my first meeting of this chapter. I was in high school at the time and had no wheels; it was my aunt, Mary Sue Shepherd, who brought me into town to see what the Audubon people were doing. The meeting was held in the basement auditorium of the old Game & Fish Commission building behind the Capitol.

That evening must have had quite an impact on me, because I joined soon after and have been an Audubon member ever since. I suspect that the meeting became a turning point in my life because it was the first time I ever sat in a roomful of people who shared my interest in birds and in protecting birds and their habitats. Before that, there had been only a few family members and an even smaller number of friends with whom I could share those interests. Here now were dozens of people from whom I could learn; and this many people with a common objective stood a chance of actually accomplishing something. What a heady notion!

It's no different today.

-----Bill Shepherd

## ARKANSAS AUDUBON SOCIETY – Spring Convention

April 27-29, 2007

Mount Sequoyah, Fayetteville

The 2007 spring meeting of the Arkansas Audubon Society will be held on **APRIL 27-29**, at **Mount Sequoyah** in Fayetteville. Registration, meals, and programs will be on The Mountain. Room reservations will be handled by the Society. To reserve one of the rooms complete the forms below with a check for full payment. The number of rooms in each category is limited. **Do not call** Mount Sequoyah as they will not be able to make room reservations.

**Directions:** Turn off College Ave onto Maple St. (a left turn if going south on College). At top of Maple turn right on Assembly Road. Go straight to the entrance. Caution: speed bumps on Maple.

For questions contact Jack at 870-715-0260 or [jackstewart\\_us@yahoo.com](mailto:jackstewart_us@yahoo.com) after February 14.

### Friday, April 27

Board Meeting (Wesley Lounge)	12:30--3:00 pm
Registration (Wesley Lounge)	4:00--5:45 pm
Supper (cafeteria)	6:00--7:00 pm
Evening program (Clapp Auditorium)	7:30--9:00 pm

### *Shorebirds in Northwestern Arkansas*

Speaker: Joe Neal  
Field trip Q & A

### Saturday, April 28

Field trips	Details at registration
AAS trust meeting (Wesley Lounge)	2:00--4:00 pm
Research Seminar (Clapp Auditorium)	3:00--4:30 pm
Trust/Camp Reception (Wesley)	5:00--5:45 pm
Supper (cafeteria)	6:00--7:00 pm
AAS business meeting (Clapp)	Following evening meal
Evening program	7:30--9:00 pm

### *Birds and Mammals of North America*

Speaker: Tom Ulrich  
Weekend checklist  
Field Trips for Sunday

\*For Registration and Field Trip information, see page 4

# Conservation News

Barry Haas

## Protecting Lake Maumelle Water Quality

As this is being written in mid-February, the effort to protect Lake Maumelle water quality by drafting, approving and then implementing a comprehensive watershed management plan is increasingly muddled.

Lake Maumelle was built in the late 1950s as a primary drinking water source for Little Rock. It currently supplies about 60% of the drinking water for 388,000 Central Arkansas Water (CAW) customers.

Since fall 2005, stakeholders ranging from developers like Deltic Timber to watershed property owners to conservation groups have been meeting to draft a Watershed Management Plan (WMP) that was hoped would protect our drinking water quality for many decades to come. Those varied interests were dubbed the Policy Advisory Council (PAC) by TetraTech, a consultant hired by the CAW board of commissioners. The PAC worked diligently over 15 months to carefully reach consensus and craft language that would protect the interests of private property owners, both small and large, in the watershed while also protecting the lake's exceptional water quality. That draft WMP went to the CAW commission in December.

During the final stages of this process the two major private landowners in the watershed, Deltic Timber and developer Rick

Ferguson, approached the PAC and then the CAW commission about signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or contract whereby Deltic or Ferguson would agree to whatever agreements were included in the MOU. Both Deltic and Ferguson want to build houses in what is called 'Critical Area A', the area closest to the water intake on the eastern end of Lake Maumelle and the most sensitive to potential contamination of our drinking water. The CAW commission's policy has been 'no development' in Critical Area A, but the MOUs would allow such development to take place. The conservation community believes Critical Area A (which is less than 5% of the watershed) should be left undeveloped and protected.

CAW currently has ongoing condemnation proceedings against both Deltic and Ferguson land in Critical Area A. We have applauded the CAW commission for its no development policy in Critical Area A and expect them to maintain that policy while implementing strong development protections in the remainder of the watershed through the WMP.

This is your drinking water. Stay informed and help protect it. If the area around Lake Maumelle is allowed to develop too densely, your water quality will get worse over time and your monthly water bill will go up due to higher treatment costs to remove increased pollutants that will wash into the lake.

---

## Extraordinary Resource Waters (ERWs)-our very best!

What's an ERW and why should you care if they are protected or not? ERW stands for Extraordinary Resource Water, the very highest quality streams, rivers and lakes in Arkansas. They might have exceptionally high water quality, esthetics or other factors that determine which water bodies qualify as an ERW. Only about 16% of all stream miles in the state are currently designated ERWs.

ERWs are currently protected from dams and other activities that would degrade them by changing the aquatic habitat or altering the instream flow. But an attempt is being made (1) to allow removal of the ERW designation from some or all ERWs, even though this appears to violate the federal Clean Water Act, and (2) to allow dams to be built on ERWs.

In early February the public comment period ended on revised language to Regulation 2, which governs water quality standards for surface waters in Arkansas. The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) is responsible for enforcing federal and state standards to protect surface waters.

ADEQ's regulatory authority is delegated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Arkansas must meet or exceed minimum federal standards related to the Clean Water Act and other federal pollution laws, for example the Clean Air Act, as well as any state standards that go beyond federal standards.

What if you owned property along an ERW? Well, you could build a house and do whatever you could do on any other property, but you could not dam or otherwise impair the ERW. That seems pretty reasonable.

Why should we care about ERWs and offer them special protections? ERWs harbor many endangered and threatened species of aquatic life, from fishes to mussels and more. So by protecting ERWs we are also protecting the habitat that many exceptional species need to survive in those areas. In addition our economy benefits when ecotourists come from many other states to enjoy and experience these areas, whether canoeing, rafting, fishing or simply enjoying the scenery.

We either care about the special wild places in Arkansas like ERWs or we will see them disappear. How would you answer your child or grandchild if they asked, "why didn't you do something to save them" after ERWs were gone for good and you had let it happen?

So what can you do? The Arkansas Pollution Control & Ecology Commission (PC&E Commission) will take up the proposed changes to Regulation 2 at an upcoming meeting. You can stay informed and send your objections to the proposed changes to Reg. 2 in hopes commissioners will do the right thing. You can go to the ADEQ web site at:

[http://www.adeq.state.ar.us/reg/drafts/reg02\\_draft\\_docket\\_06-010-R/reg02\\_draft\\_docket\\_06-010-R.htm](http://www.adeq.state.ar.us/reg/drafts/reg02_draft_docket_06-010-R/reg02_draft_docket_06-010-R.htm)

(cut and paste the entire URL above) and get more information including when the PC&E Commission will vote on the proposed changes. This is Commission Docket #06-010-R.

**Registration for Arkansas Audubon Spring Meeting  
April 27-28, 2007 at Mount Sequoyah, Fayetteville**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Please place a large "X" on the line if this is your first AAS meeting or if you have not attended for some time.** \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting registration # \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$15/person \_\_\_\_\_  
*Early bird April 12 or before \$10/person*  
 Friday night meal # \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10 per person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Saturday night meal # \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10 per person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Donation to help pay meeting costs \_\_\_\_\_  
 Room at selected rate \_\_\_\_\_ x # nights \_\_\_\_\_  
*Select type of room desired on the next form*  
 Total (Field Trip fees are included in your registration) \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Arkansas Audubon Society mail to:  
 Jack Stewart, AAS Vice President  
 P.O. Box 632  
 Jasper, AR 72641

Mail by April 12, for the Early Bird discount and subtract \$5/person from the registration fee.

**Indicate your choice of field trip.**  
 First Choice \_\_\_\_\_ number of participants \_\_\_\_\_  
 Second Choice \_\_\_\_\_ number of participants \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I do NOT need accommodations  
 \_\_\_\_ I do need accommodations

*Note: some trips may be repeated Sunday if there is sufficient interest.*

**Room Reservations**

Accommodations at Mount Sequoyah include a variety of rooms with private or shared bathrooms in Wesley hall and cottages with private bathrooms and double and/or queen beds. If you would like some different configuration, such as two couples or three friends sharing a room, make a note on the form below and we will try to accommodate your wishes. To keep this bewildering array of combinations simple, the following choices are available:

	Friday	Saturday
Private bath double or single \$75/ night	_____	_____
Shared bath double or single \$55/ night	_____	_____

**Don't forget to transfer the total room rate to the registration form.**

Important note: If someone in your group cannot negotiate stairs, please indicate this below. There are a limited # of ground floor rooms in Wesley Hall. We encourage anyone with mobility problems to register as early as possible.

I/we require a ground floor room \_\_\_\_\_

**Please let AAS know of any special requests or needs. Don't be shy; we need to know what you want.**

**Organized Field Trip Options – each field trip is limited to 20 participants**

**A) Craig State Fish Hatchery** - at Centerton (about 40 min. from the conference center) and Lake Atalanta (Rogers). The fish hatchery can be an outstanding spot to see shorebirds and other open country birds. It has a series of ponds, some of which may be drawn down. Atalanta is a park area with lake and forest edge. Walk as much or as little as you like. Depart: 7:30

paved to provide outstanding access for those with walking disabilities. A short loop provides good access to a viewing platform near the lake's center at the Lake Fayetteville Environmental Study Center. An attractive bridge over the spillway provides excellent views of forest and stream bottom habitat. Depart: 7:30

**B) Chesney Prairie Natural Area** - at Siloam Springs (about 40 min. from the conference center) is Tallgrass Prairie habitat midst the former Lindsley Prairie. Grassland and open country birds predominate. A drive on the county roads is interesting, but it's all walking on a mowed trail within the 60 preserved acres. Depart: 7:00

**F) Mount Sequoyah Methodist Assembly grounds and Skyline Drive** - both right at the conference center: urban and upland mature forest birds. Easy walking on paved walkways and roads. Departures: 7:00 and 8:00

**Sunday field trips**

**C) U of A Experimental Farm** - in Fayetteville, just north of the U of A campus (about 10 min. from conference center) provides diverse open cropland habitats and an open farm pond that can be productive during spring migration. The area is crosshatched by farm roads, so some driving will occur, as well as walking. (This area is normally closed to the public) Depart: 7:45

**Upper Buffalo National River and Cave Mountain** – (all day trip) is about one hour and 15 minutes from Fayetteville. On this trip we will explore parts of Lost Valley, the Boxley Millpond and the upland forests along Cave Mountain Road. The birds in this area are highly diverse. Cave Mountain is an excellent place for Cerulean Warbler. The trip combines driving and walking, but none of the walking is extensive. Depart: 8:00

**D) DEVIL'S DEN STATE PARK** - (about 40 min. from the conference center) provides unique access to the hardwood forests in the rugged Boston Mountains. There are several improved trails in the park that require walking. This area has the full range of resident forestland birds and can be outstanding during spring migration. Lee Creek with its riparian forest bisects the park and is a magnet for birds. Depart: 7:00

**Mt Sequoyah Methodist Assembly grounds and Skyline Drive**, both right at the conference center: urban and upland mature forest birds. Easy walking on paved walkways and roads. Departures: 6:30 and 8:00. Sign-up Saturday.

**Saturday field trips** may be repeated on Sunday depending upon interest.

**E) LAKE FAYETTEVILLE** - (about 10 min. from conference center) includes lake, forest, and urban edge habitats that provide a wide variety of birds directly across from Northwest Arkansas Mall. An easily walked trail loops around the lake, and about one third of the distance has been recently

**"ON YOUR OWN" FIELD TRIPS:** Maps or written information will be available at registration to areas you many wish to explore on your own.

## Upcoming Programs

The ASCA meets at 7:00 PM the second Thursday of each month at the John Gould Fletcher Library, 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.

~~~~~

### March 8, 2007 – Arkansas Box Turtles

Guest Speaker: **Michael Warriner**  
Program: **Arkansas Box Turtle Survey**

Michael Warriner, the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission (ANHC) information officer assumed his new role as the Nature Guy with his first appearance on KATV Channel 7's *Good Morning Arkansas* in February 2006. As ANHC's spokesperson, the Nature Guy engages Arkansans in learning about the state's native plants and animals.

This April, the ANHC will kick off its third citizen-science survey in the form of the Arkansas Box Turtle Survey. While perceived as being common, research suggests that box turtle populations are on the decline. This survey will solicit box turtle observations from individuals' statewide – Turtle-watchers that is. This data will serve as a critical baseline for future efforts to assess box turtle populations in Arkansas. If you like box turtles – and who doesn't – come learn more about these gentle creatures and how you can contribute to their conservation.

~~~~~

### April 12, 2007 – Wetlands Reserve Program

Guest Speaker: **Brent Kelley**  
Program: **Audubon Arkansas' Wetlands Reserve Program**

Brent Kelley, Field Programs Coordinator for Audubon Arkansas, will describe Audubon's efforts to restore wetlands through the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP). WRP is a federal farm bill program that puts unproductive land back into its natural state. Private landowners who participate in this program have the opportunity to practice wildlife conservation and protection on portions of their land that would otherwise be unusable for normal farming practices.

Through backbreaking and muckraking work, Brent and his team planted over 78,000 trees on over 400 acres in Pulaski Co. Come learn more about this hands-on, on-the-ground aspect of conservation.

~~~~~

### May 12, 2007 – International Migratory Bird Day

We will not have a regular program or meeting in May.

Instead we will be celebrating **International Migratory Bird Day** on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, with a field trip to **Allsopp and Murray Parks** in Little Rock. Afterwards, instead of our regular potluck and picnic this year, we have decided to meet at the Dixie Café, on Rebsamen Park Road for lunch. This is a great time to visit, make new friends and share stories. For specific details please see **May 12<sup>th</sup> field trip to Allsopp and Murray Parks** on page 6.

## **Grand Prairie Birding**

February 10, 2007

Nineteen birders enjoyed the specialty winter grassland birds of Stuttgart Airport. Our group included members of three Audubon Chapters - ASCA, Hot Springs Village, and Three Rivers.

We flushed up to 8 **Le Conte's Sparrows** but few of us got good looks. We also flushed 3-4 **Sedge Wrens** and everyone got long, close looks at one bird. At first the **Smith's Longspurs** seemed hard to find because some of their habitat had been prescribed burned. But we eventually encountered a flock of 40 birds towards the south end of the north-south runway and we had a long look at 3 birds foraging in the open where a burned spot met their preferred *Aristida* grass habitat.

After lunch, we headed south to Roth Prairie Natural Area. Our target was **Short-eared Owls**. We formed a line that practically spanned the entire width of the prairie. The line started forward and within a few dozen feet we flushed 8 owls. In a field across the road we watched flocks of **Lapland Longspurs** and **Horned Larks** repeatedly appear and disappear among the furrows and stubble.

As we were driving back to Stuttgart Airport, Bill Holimon called to say he had found 2-3 **Sprague's Pipits**. After arriving we formed our line again and in no time flushed 2 birds. We also had good looks at these cooperative birds through binoculars and scopes! As we watched the pipits and some fairly cooperative *Smith's Longspurs*, 5-6 **Short-eared Owls** patrolled the runways; one fought with a **Northern Harrier** for supremacy of the airspace.

Finally we lined up our cars across from the hanger with the owl boxes and at 6:20 watched three **Barn Owls** come out and fly around. Two perched in the pine tree next to the hanger. Another grand day of prairie birding!

Dan Scheiman  
Little Rock, AR



This Sedge Wren was photographed Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>, by Robert Herron at the Stuttgart Airport

## Sightings from Around the State

Here is a partial list of some of the unusual birds being reported from around the state.

On Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, Susan Hardin spotted a female **Rufous Hummingbird** visiting her feeder in west Little Rock. Susan named her 'Ann Richards', after the former governor of Texas. She has stayed all winter.

Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>, Charles Mills found a **Palm Warbler** at the spillway at Lake Millwood.

On Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, Mike Mlodinow and Joe Neal viewed two **Prairie Falcons**, a few miles SE of Maysville.

Rob Doster found 7 female **Common Mergansers** on Lake Pine Bluff on Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>.

Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, Rob also reported a **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** at the Pine Bluff Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Sat., Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, Dick Baxter had a first-winter **Black-legged Kittiwake** on Lake Chicot.

Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>, six **Eared Grebes** were seen at the Pine Bluff Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Thurs., Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, Dick Baxter found a **Say's Phoebe** in Greene County near the town of Light.

At Lake Dardanelle, on Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>, Kenny Nichols found a **Tufted Duck**. Also a **Palm Warbler** at Holla Bend.

Sun., Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>, five **Red-throated Loons** and a **Surf Scoter** were seen at Lake Maumelle by several birders.

Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>, Dick Baxter spotted 19 **Sandhill Cranes** near Birdsong in Craighead County.

Thurs., Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>, Delos McCauley found a **Pacific Loon** at Lake DeGray.

Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>, Kenny Nichols reported a 2nd winter **Thayer's Gull** below the dam at Dardanelle. Also seen that day on the lake, just before sunset, were a **Surf** and **White-winged Scoter**.

Thurs. Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, Jason Luscier saw an immature **Golden Eagle** just east of Rex Hancock/Black Swamp WMA off Hwy 17 near Wiville.

Sat., Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>, Dennis Braddy reported seeing two **Western Grebe's** at Lake DeGray.

Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>, Kenny Nichols and others found a **Clark's Grebe** on Lake Dardanelle. This will be a **first state record** for Arkansas pending acceptance by the AR Bird Records Committee. On Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>, Kenny and LaDonna found an adult **California Gull** on the lake.

Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>, Kenny and LaDonna saw around 125 **Smith's Longspurs** at the Newport Airport.

Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, Dennis Braddy reported an immature **Golden Eagle** at Holla Bend.

On Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, Max and Helen Parker and Perk and Liana Floyd banded a female **Anna's Hummingbird** that had been in Little Rock for some time. She was banded, weighed, measured and released in no time. This is the **6th** known Anna's Hummingbird for Arkansas and the third one to be banded.



## *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](http://www.ascabird.org) for more information about upcoming field trips.

~~~~~  
*March 3, 2007*

### **Rick Evans/Grandview Prairie Wildlife Management Area**

We will meet at the south end of the commuter parking lot at I-630 and Shackleford Road at 8:00 am and carpool to this expansive remnant backland prairie in southwestern AR. We'll arrive around 10:00 at the visitor's center for those who want to meet us there. Our target species are wintering grassland birds such Le Conte's Sparrow, Sedge Wren, and possibly Henslow's Sparrow. Pack a lunch and plenty of water. We will drive gravel roads and periodically stop to walk through tall grass in search of birds. Boots are recommended. For more information contact Bill Shepherd at [stoneax63@hotmail.com](mailto:stoneax63@hotmail.com) or (501) 375-3918.

~~~~~  
*April 21, 2007*

### **Boyle Park, Little Rock**

We will meet at Brandon House Furniture at University Ave. and 12<sup>th</sup> Street at 7:30 am, we will carpool to Boyle Park from there. Spring migration will be heating up!

Our target birds include warblers, vireos, tanagers, orioles, flycatchers, and more. This will be a half-day trip so we should be finished around lunchtime, however bring plenty of water. The walking will be held to short, level trails. This is an opportunity for Little Rock area birders to explore a great birding location in our own backyard! For more information contact Dottie Boyles at [ctboyles@aristotle.net](mailto:ctboyles@aristotle.net)

~~~~~  
*May 12, 2007*

### **Allsopp and Murray Parks, Little Rock** **International Migratory Bird Day**

We will be celebrating **International Migratory Bird Day** on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, with a field trip to **Allsopp** and **Murray Parks** in Little Rock, both parks are great habitat for spring migrating warblers.

We will meet at **Allsopp Park** at 7:30 am. 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. We will bird at Allsopp Park for a while, and then travel to nearby **Murray Park**.

Afterwards, we will meet at the Dixie Café, located at 1301 Rebsamen Park Road, for lunch. This is a great time to get to know each other, meet new friends and share stories and adventures. For more information please contact Dottie Boyles at [ctboyles@aristotle.net](mailto:ctboyles@aristotle.net)



# *Field Trip Reports*

## Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge

*January 20, 2007*

Unfortunately the weather did not cooperate for this field trip and it was rained out.

## Andrew Hulsey Fish Hatchery and Arkadelphia Sewer Ponds

*February 10, 2007*

The Andrew Hulsey Fish Hatchery is on the south side of Lake Hamilton in southern Garland County. It was quite cool while we were there walking some of the pond levees. We did not, as in years past, see any rarities like Surf Scoter or Oldsquaw. We did get to study scores of **Black Vultures** standing on nearby levees. A total of 41 species were seen, including quite a few **Horned Grebes** on Lake Hamilton. We also had good looks at **Bonaparte's Gulls**.

After lunch, we drove just east of Arkadelphia to the sewer ponds. We added 12 more species to our trip count, including some good looks at a **Forster's Tern** (1st winter). Fortunately, the Forster's was standing on something when we first approached and then scoped out the nearest large pond (there are only four ponds, three of them quite large). The Forster's then spent quite a bit of time on the wing, and finally perched again so we could scope it at a much closer distance. What a nice sight! We also got to see one male **Canvasback** at Arkadelphia after seeing a single female Canvasback at the fish hatchery. A lone female **Blue-winged Teal** was also unattached at Arkadelphia. We ended the day with a total of 11 duck species out of 53 total.

One interesting sighting was a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** on a pond levee in between the two largest ponds, several hundred yards from the nearest trees. It was hanging out with a **Song Sparrow**, and appeared to be having an identity crisis. Swooped to the water's surface like a phoebe, and just generally hung with the Song Sparrow, advancing down the levee as we walked along. The sewer ponds are almost totally surrounded by woods, but the Yellow-rumped never showed an interest in trees at any time while we were watching it.

So, no rarities or maybe, even outstanding birds. But great fun nonetheless and a lot better than sitting at home vegetating in front of the TV.

*Barry Haas*

## Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Counts

*December 2006*

The **Lonoke CBC** was held on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. Eighteen participants traveled 293 party miles by car and almost 9 miles by foot over a total of 50 party hours to count 53,347 individuals of 97 species. A quick comparison to historical data showed this year to be somewhat below average for most species. We did set a new high count for Double-crested Cormorant at 382 (previously 295), tied the high count for Bald Eagle at 2, and almost beat the previous Eastern Bluebird high count (48 vs. 49). Hermit Thrush was the only bird we missed that regularly occurs on the count. Good birds included 2 **Common Yellowthroats** (found by Barry Haas's group), and a **Nashville Warbler** (a first for the count and a new late date for the state, found by Bill Holimon's group).

The **Little Rock CBC** was held on Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>. Twenty hardy souls braved the rain and traveled 335 party miles over 67 party hours to count 19,605 birds of 89 species. Despite the rain we did record a few high counts, a few uncommon species, one new species to the count, and a fantastic count week bird. Rob Doster found a juvenile **Black-legged Kittiwake** at the Big Dam Bridge the day before the CBC. It is too bad we couldn't find it during the count. Bill Holimon's **Ross's Goose** was a new bird for this CBC. There just isn't a lot of goose habitat in this circle. Other species observed this year but not every year included 1 **Northern Pintail**, 2 **Virginia Rails**, 1 **Bewick's Wren**, 1 **Sedge Wren** and 2 **Gray Catbirds**. High counts were set for Mallard (227), American Robin (1475), Yellow-rumped Warbler (477), White-crowned Sparrow (120) and Rusty Blackbird (460, blowing away last year's high count of 122).

You can explore the entire CBC dataset at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/hr/index.html>. Thanks to ASCA for sponsoring the count by paying everyone's \$5 fee. An extra special thanks goes to everyone who participated. The CBC is the longest running citizen science program in the country and would not be possible without your time and effort! Birders of all levels are welcome to participate. I hope you'll join us next year.

*Dan Scheiman  
CBC Compiler*

**Audubon Society of Central Arkansas**

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

Forwarding and return postage guaranteed.  
Return service requested.



This **Say's Phoebe** was photographed  
by Dick Baxter of Jonesboro  
on January 18<sup>th</sup>, near the town of Light, AR

**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.

**Who 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.